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Thomas THE Scott.

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

5534

A NEW EDITION,

IN FIFTEEN VOLUMES.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

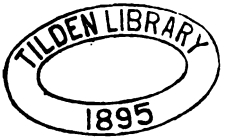
VOL. IV.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR BELL & BRADFUTE, JAMES M'CLIESH, AND WILLIAM BLACKWOOD;

GILBERT & HODGES, DUBLIN; AND S. CAMPBELL, NEW YORK.

1806.



G. Caw, Printer,
Edinburgh.

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THE

RAMBLER.

N° 1. TUESDAY, MARCH 20. 1750.

Cur tamen hoc libeat potius dcurrere campo,
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
Si vacat et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.

JUV.

Why to expatiate in this beaten field,
Why arms oft used in vain, I mean to wield;
If time permit, and candour will attend,
Some satisfaction this essay may lend.

ELPHINSTON.

THE difficulty of the first address on any new occasion, is felt by every man in his transactions with the world, and confessed by the settled and regular forms of salutation which necessity has introduced into all languages. Judgment was wearied with the perplexity of being forced upon choice, where there was no motive to preference; and it was found convenient that some easy method of introduction should be established, which, if it wanted the allurement of novelty, might enjoy the security of prescription.

Perhaps few authors have presented themselves before the public, without wishing that such cere-

monial modes of entrance had been anciently established, as might have freed them from those dangers which the desire of pleasing is certain to produce, and precluded the vain expedients of softening censure by apologies, or rousing attention by abruptness.

The epick writers have found the proemial part of the poem such an addition to their undertaking, that they have almost unanimously adopted the first lines of Homer, and the reader needs only be informed of the subject, to know in what manner the poem will begin.

But this solemn repetition is hitherto the peculiar distinction of heroick poetry; it has never been legally extended to the lower orders of literature, but seems to be considered as an hereditary privilege, to be enjoyed only by those who claim it from their alliance to the genius of Homer.

The rules which the injudicious use of this prerogative suggested to Horace, may indeed be applied to the direction of candidates for inferior fame; it may be proper for all to remember, that they ought not to raise expectation which it is not in their power to satisfy, and that it is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke.

This precept has been long received, both from regard to the authority of Horace, and its conformity to the general opinion of the world; yet there have been always some, that thought it no deviation from modesty to recommend their own labours, and imagined themselves intitled by indisputable merit to an exemption from general restraints, and to elevations not allowed in common

life. They, perhaps, believed, that when, like Thucydides, they bequeathed to mankind κ]τημα ες αει, *an estate for ever*, it was an additional favour to inform them of its value.

It may, indeed, be no less dangerous to claim, on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and intrepidity, to which we often yield, as to a resistless power; nor can he reasonably expect the confidence of others, who too apparently distrusts himself.

Plutarch, in his enumeration of the various occasions on which a man may without just offence proclaim his own excellencies, has omitted the case of an author entering the world; unless it may be comprehended under this general position, that a man may lawfully praise himself for those qualities which cannot be known but from his own mouth; as when he is among strangers, and can have no opportunity of an actual exertion of his powers. That the case of an author is parallel will scarcely be granted, because he necessarily discovers the degree of his merit to his judges when he appears at his trial. But it should be remembered, that unless his judges are inclined to favour him, they will hardly be persuaded to hear the cause.

In love, the state which fills the heart with a degree of solicitude next that of an author, it has been held a maxim, that success is most easily obtained by indirect and unperceived approaches: he who too soon professes himself a lover, raises obstacles to his own wishes; and those whom disappointments have taught experience, endeavour to conceal their passion till they believe their mis

tress wishes for the discovery. The same method if it were practicable to writers, would save many complaints of the severity of the age, and the caprices of criticism. If a man could glide imperceptibly into the favour of the public, and only proclaim his pretensions to literary honours when he is sure of not being rejected, he might commence author with better hopes, as his failings might escape contempt, though he shall never attain much regard.

But since the world supposes every man that writes, ambitious of applause, as some ladies have taught themselves to believe that every man intends love who expresses civility, the miscarrage of any endeavour in learning raises an unbounded contempt, indulged by most minds without scruple, as an honest triumph over unjust claims and exorbitant expectations. The artifices of those who put themselves in this hazardous state, have therefore been multiplied in proportion to their fear as well as their ambition; and are to be looked upon with more indulgence, as they are incited at once by the two great movers of the human mind, the desire of good, and the fear of evil. For who can wonder, that, allured on one side, and frightened on the other, some should endeavour to gain favour by bribing the judge with an appearance of respect which they do not feel, to excite compassion by confessing weakness of which they are not convinced, and others to attract regard by a shew of openness and magnanimity, by a daring profession of their own deserts, and a public challenge of honours and rewards?

The ostentatious and haughty display of themselves has been the usual refuge of diurnal writers, in vindication of whose practice it may be said, that what it wants in prudence is supplied by sincerity; and who at least may plead, that if their boasts deceive any into the perusal of their performances, they defraud them of but little time.

——Quid enim? Concurritur—horæ
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

The battle join, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight.

The question concerning the merit of the day is soon decided, and we are not condemned to toil through half a folio, to be convinced that the writer has broke his promise.

It is one among many reasons for which I purpose to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay on Tuesday and Saturday, that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not happen to please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.

There are, indeed, many conveniencies almost peculiar to this method of publication, which may

naturally flatter the author, whether he be confident or timorous. The man to whom the extent of his knowledge, or the sprightliness of his imagination, has, in his own opinion, already secured the praises of the world, willingly takes that way of displaying his abilities which will soonest give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of fame; it heightens his alacrity to think in how many places he shall hear what he is now writing read with extasies to-morrow. He will often please himself with reflecting, that the author of a large treatise must proceed with anxiety, lest, before the completion of his work, the attention of the publick may have changed its object; but that he who is confined to no single topick, may follow the national taste through all its variations, and catch the *aura popularis*, the gale of favour, from what point soever it shall blow.

Nor is the prospect less likely to ease the doubts of the cautious, and the terrors of the fearful; for to such the shortness of every single paper is a powerful encouragement. He that questions his abilities to arrange the dissimilar parts of an extensive plan, or fears to be lost in a complicated system, may yet hope to adjust a few pages without perplexity; and if, when he turns over the repositories of his memory, he finds his collection too small for a volume, he may yet have enough to furnish out an essay. He that would fear to lay out too much time upon an experiment of which he knows not the event, persuades himself that a few days will shew him what he is to expect from his learning and his genius. If he thinks his own judgment not sufficiently enlightened, he may

by attending to the remarks which every paper will produce, rectify his opinions. If he should with too little premeditation encumber himself by an unwieldy subject, he can quit it without confessing his ignorance, and pass to other topicks less dangerous, or more tractable. And if he finds, with all his industry, and all his artifices, that he cannot deserve regard, or cannot attain it, he may let the design fall at once, and, without injury to others or himself, retire to amusements of greater pleasure, or to studies of better prospect.

N° 2. SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1750.

Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.

STATIUS.

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.

POPE.

THAT the mind of man is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in schemes of future felicity; and that we forget the proper use of the time now in our power, to provide for the enjoyment of that which perhaps may never be granted us, has been frequently remarked: and as this practice is a commodious subject of raillery to the gay, and of declamation to the serious, it has been ridiculed with all the pleasantry of wit, and exaggerated with all

the amplifications of rhetorick. Every instance, by which its absurdity might appear most flagrant, has been studiously collected; it has been marked with every epithet of contempt, and all the tropes and figures have been called forth against it.

Censure is willingly indulged, because it always implies some superiority: men please themselves with imagining that they have made a deeper search, or wider survey, than others, and detected faults and follies which escape vulgar observation. And the pleasure of wantoning in common topicks is so tempting to a writer, that he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiments generally received enables him to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is so easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives only in idea, refuses immediate ease for distant pleasures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings of life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjoy them; it affords such opportunities of triumphant exultation, to exemplify the uncertainty of the human state, to rouse mortals from their dream, and inform them of the silent celerity of time, that we may believe authors willing rather to transmit than examine so advantageous a principle, and more inclined to pursue a track so smooth and so flowery, than attentively to consider whether it leads to truth.

This quality of looking forward into futurity seems the unavoidable condition of a being whose motions are gradual, and whose life is progressive: as his powers are limited, he must use means for the attainment of his ends, and intend first what he performs last; as by continual advances from his first stage of existence, he is perpetually varying

the horizon of his prospects, he must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire.

The end therefore which at present calls forth our efforts, will be found, when it is once gained, to be only one of the means to some remoter end. The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour, must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet, as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed, that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or enforced with too little distinction: for, not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of Heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens, that, by indulging early the raptures of success, we forgot the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer the imagination to riot in the fruition of

some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would however be few enterprises of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself, in such a manner that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicited to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may indeed be easily vitiated by the luxurious indulgence of hope, however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requires more to be cautioned against this anticipation of happiness, than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world;

and, with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten, and those whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of their infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physick of the mind, her catharticks of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the symptoms of the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection; not without some weak hope, that my preservatives may extend their virtue to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger:

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm. FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect, compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness; yet this worst, this meanst fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

Go now and meditate thy tuneful lays.
ELPHINSTON.

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers, as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect: that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth intitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind: that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprising or confident than himself; equally pleased with their own productions, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by their friends.

But though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures, or immersed

in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges prepossessed by passions or corrupted by prejudices, which preclude their approbation of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is rejected, because it is not sufficently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased: and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

N° 3. TUESDAY, MARCH 27. 1750.

Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ.

HOR.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours virtue shines,
Nor takes up pow'r, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown.

FRANCIS.

The task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new light in upon the mind, and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because, that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errors, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing, must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

It might be imagined that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous, that none would be found so malevolent as wan-

tonly to add weight to the stone of Sisyphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expence of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning or genius, who stand as centinels in the avenues of Fame, and value themselves upon giving IGNORANCE and ENVY the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of CRITICKS, it is necessary for a new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the records of ancient times, that ARGUS was lulled by music and CERBERUS quieted with a sop; and am therefore inclined to believe that modern criticks, who, if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of ARGUS, and can bark as loud as CERBERUS, though perhaps they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act

against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, stiled themselves the ministers of CRITICISM, without any authentick evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

CRITICISM, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of LABOUR and of TRUTH: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of JUSTICE, and brought up by her in the palace of WISDOM. Being soon distinguished by the celestials, for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess of FANCY, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the MUSES when they sung before the throne of JUPITER.

When the MUSES condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by CRITICISM, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, JUSTICE gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tinctured with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden foliage of amaranths and bays; the other end was incircled with cypress, and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand, she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by LABOUR, and lighted by TRUTH, of which it was the particular quality immediately to shew every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common eyes. Whatever ART could complicate, or FOLLY could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the torch of TRUTH, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and shewed

at once all the absurdities to which they served for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetorick often sold to falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts, which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, CRITICISM came down to survey the performances of those who professed themselves the votaries of the MUSES. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the torch of TRUTH; and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine end of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the works which required her inspection, there was some imposture attempted; that false colours were laboriously laid; that some secret inequality was found between the words and sentiments, or some dissimilitude of the ideas and the original objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to enlarge the appearance of the whole, without contributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and they were made whenever these faults were committed, CRITICISM refused the touch which conferred the sanction of immortality; and, when the errors were frequent and gross, reversed the sceptre, and let drops of lethe distil from the poppies and cypress, a fatal mildew, which immediatly began to waste the work away, till it was at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the test, in which, when the strongest light was thrown upon them, their beauties and faults appeared so equally mingled, that CRITICISM stood with her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt whether to shed lethe or ambrosia upon them. These at last increased to so great a number, that she was weary of attending such doubtful claims; and, for fear of using improperly the sceptre of JUSTICE, referred the cause, to be considered by TIME.

The proceedings of TIME, though very dilatory, were, some few caprices excepted, conformable to justice: and many who thought themselves secure by a short forbearance, have sunk under his scythe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

CRITICISM having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon TIME, was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness ASTREA, and left PREJUDICE and FALSE TASTE to ravage at large as the associates of FRAUD and MISCHIEF; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select minds, fitted for its reception by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of which the shivers that formed the ambrosial end were caught up by FLATTERY, and those that had been infected with the waters of lethe were with equal haste seized by MALEVOLENCE. The followers of FLATTERY, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light,

but touched indiscriminately whatever POWER or INTEREST happened to exhibit. The companions of MALEVOLENCE were supplied by the FURIES with a torch, which had this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

No light, but rather darkness visible,
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of FLATTERY and MALEVOLENCE marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality or condemn to oblivion. But the sceptre had now lost its power; and TIME passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

N° 4. SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1750

Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.

HOR.

And join both profit and delight in one.

CREECH.

THE works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comick poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy

means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroick romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner, almost all the fictions of the last age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long, in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different: it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum*

veniæ minus, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader; as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears; are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree of caution is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little

danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers, and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man, young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed; as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situa-

tion, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature which are most proper for imitation: greater care still is required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously decribed, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind as upon a mirrour which shews all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears, for many characters ought never to be drawn; nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience, for that observation which is called knowledge of the world will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to shew mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by TREACHERY for INNOCENCE, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicu-

ous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be perceived, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either a part is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be 'grateful in the same degree as they are resentful.' This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes men to act from a brute repulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that

inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely, that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other; and in judging, if not of others at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute who confound the colours of right and wrong; and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives, were his torical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shewn, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but fear-

ed; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.

N° 5. TUESDAY, APRIL 3. 1750.

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.
VIRG.

Now ev'ry field, now ev'ry tree is green;
Now genial nature's fairest face is seen.
ELPHINSTON.

EVERY man is sufficiently discontented with some circumstances of his present state to suffer his imagination to range more or less in quest of future happiness, and to fix upon some point of time, in which, by the removal of the inconvenience which now perplexes him, or acquisition of the advantage which he at present wants, he shall find the condition of his life very much improved.

When this time, which is too often expected with great impatience, at last arrives, it generally comes without the blessing for which it was desired; but we solace ourselves with some new prospect, and press forward again with equal eagerness.

It is lucky for a man in whom this temper prevails, when he turns his hopes upon things wholly out of his own power; since he forbears then to

precipitate his affairs, for the sake of the great event that is to complete his felicity, and waits for the blissful hour with less neglect of the measures necessary to be taken in the mean time.

I have long known a person of this temper, who indulged his dream of happiness with less hurt to himself than such chimerical wishes commonly produce, and adjusted his scheme with such address, that his hopes were in full bloom three parts of the year, and in the other part never wholly blasted. Many, perhaps, would be desirous of learning by what means he procured to himself such a cheap and lasting satisfaction. It was gained by a constant practice of referring the removal of all his uneasiness to the coming of the next spring; if his health was impaired, the spring would restore it; if what he wanted was at a high price, it would fall its value in the spring.

The spring indeed did often come without any of these effects, but he was always certain that the next would be more propitious; nor was ever convinced, that the present spring would fail him before the middle of summer; for he always talked of the spring as coming till it was past, and when it was once past, every one agreed with him that it was coming.

By long converse with this man, I am, perhaps, brought to feel immoderate pleasure in the contemplation of this delightful season; but I have the satisfaction of finding many, whom it can be no shame to resemble, infected with the same enthusiasm; for there is, I believe, scarce any poet of eminence, who has not left some testimony of his fondness for the flowers, the zephyrs, [illegible]

warblers of the spring. Nor has the most luxuriant imagination been able to describe the serenity and happiness of the golden age, otherwise than by giving a perpetual spring as the highest reward of uncorrupted innocence.

There is, indeed, something inexpressibly pleasing in the annual renovation of the world, and the new display of the treasures of nature. The cold and darkness of winter, with the naked deformity of every object on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped, as for what we may enjoy; and every budding flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us as a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The SPRING affords to a mind so free from the disturbance of cares or passions as to be vacant to calm amusements, almost every thing that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odours, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal, from the growth of his food, and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gaiety, significantly expressed by the smile of nature.

Yet there are men to whom these scenes are able to give no delight, and who hurry away from all the varieties of rural beauty, to lose their hours and divert their thoughts by cards, or assemblies, a tavern dinner, or the prattle of the day.

It may be laid down as a position which will seldom deceive, that when a man cannot bear his own company there is something wrong. He must fly from himself, either because he feels a tediousness in life from the equipoise of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one motion more than another but as it is impelled by some external power, must always have recourse to foreign objects; or he must be afraid of the intrusion of some unpleasing ideas; and, perhaps, is struggling to escape from the remembrance of a loss, the fear of a calamity, or some other thought of greater horror.

Those whom sorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleasures of contemplation, may properly apply to such diversions, provided they are innocent, as lay strong hold on the attention; and those whom fear of any future affliction chains down to misery, must endeavour to obviate the danger.

My considerations shall, on this occasion, be turned on such as are burdensome to themselves, merely because they want subjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open, without affording them pleasure or instruction, because they never learned to read the characters.

A French author has advanced this seeming paradox, that *very few men know how to take a walk*; and, indeed, it is true, that few know how to take a walk with a prospect of any other pleasure, than the same company would have afforded them at home.

There are animals that borrow their colour from the neighbouring body, and consequently vary their hue as they happen to change their place.

In like manner, it ought to be the endeavour of every man to derive his reflections from the objects about him; for it is to no purpose that he alters his position, if his attention continues fixed to the same point. The mind should be kept open to the access of every new idea, and so far disengaged from the predominance of particular thoughts, as easily to accommodate itself to occasional entertainment.

A man that has formed this habit of turning every new object to his entertainment, finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock, without any temptations to envy or malevolence; faults, perhaps, seldom totally avoided by those whose judgment is much exercised upon the works of art. He has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the Author of the universe, and probable hopes of making some discovery of benefit to others, or of profit to himself. There is no doubt but many vegetables and animals have qualities that might be of great use, to the knowledge of which there is not required much force of penetration or fatigue of study, but only frequent experiments and close attention. What is said by the chemists of their darling mercury, is, perhaps, true of every body through the whole creation, that, if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.

Mankind must necessarily be diversified by various tastes, since life affords and requires such multiplicity of employments, and a nation of naturalists is neither to be hoped nor desired; but it is surely not improper to point out a fresh amuse-

ment to those who languish in health and repine in plenty, for want of some source of diversion that may be less easily exhausted, and to inform the multitudes of both sexes, who are burdened with every new day, that there are many shows which they have not seen.

He that enlarges his curiosity after the works of nature, demonstrably multiplies the inlets to happiness; and, therefore, the younger part of my readers, to whom I dedicate this vernal speculation, must excuse me for calling upon them, to make use at once of the spring of the year, and the spring of life; to acquire, while their minds may be yet impressed with new images, a love of innocent pleasures, and an ardour for useful knowledge; and to remember, that a blighted spring makes a barren year, and that the vernal flowers, however beautiful and gay, are only intended by nature as preparatives to autumnal fruits.

N° 6. SATURDAY, APRIL 7. 1750.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere: quod petis, hic eſt;
Eſt Ulubris, animus si te non deficit æquus.

HOR.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness, which dwells at home:
With vain pursuits fatigu'd, at length you'll find
No place excludes it from an equal mind.

ELPHINSTON.

THAT man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the Stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised an utter exclusion of all corporal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy, can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation; it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very properly enquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach, how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity: for, though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission to the tyranny of casual trou-

bles, is below the dignity of that mind, which, however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for an union with infinite goodness and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitiis pejora fovens
Proprium deserat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original.

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of preserving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion, and having nothing within that can entertain or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burthen of life, are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the dispatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one evening in conversation with each other, on a sudden, such are the revolutions of the

world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptom of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water*? These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thirst, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor, which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the variety of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and, indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errors, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of

happiness to which the imagination of a girl upon the loss of her first lover could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

"My desire," says he, "has been for some years "past, though the execution has been accidentally "diverted, and does still vehemently continue, to "retire myself to some of our American planta- "tions; not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with "the traffick of those parts, which is the end of "most men that travel thither, but to forsake this "world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations "of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure "retreat, but not without the consolation of let- "ters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made, in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to bury himself in some obscure retreat, he might have found in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into publick life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier

than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement need not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannising over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retirement or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowely had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the *vanities* and *vexations* of the world, not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of America could afford him: but having once his mind imbittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedi-

tion of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels.

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfaction. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries which he was so studious to obviate; for such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated; we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted, whether his distance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man who feels pain, to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley, having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement; he never suspected that the cause of his unhapiness was within, that this own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea,

and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing, but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.

N° 7. TUESDAY, APRIL 10. 1750.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum coelique Sator?——
Dissice terrenæ nebulas & pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere finis
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.

BOETHIUS.

O thou whose pow'r o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence, and holy rest;
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we ten
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

THE love of RETIREMENT has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they

possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore, surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue or science, the man, whose faculties enable him to make ready comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

Nor will greatness, or abundance, exempt him from the importunities of this desire; since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand enquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder; for those who are most exalted above dependence or controul, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, that there was no royal way to geometry. Other things

may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or inspirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is an universal reason for some stated intervals of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me, now especially, to mention; a reason, which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastick security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrors of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to

joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle represents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides, in most things that relate solely to this life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance, every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered, that almost every man has, in some part

of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them by an unresisting neutrality to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of they influence which they must naturally gain by this preoccupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires, in the first endeavours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accumstomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate, that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have power to transfer the weight to either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in [illegible] authority, even without those irradiat[illegible]

above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

N° 8. SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1750.

——Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.

JUV.

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault.

CREECH.

If the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account, according to the manner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects; how small a proportion his real action would bear to his seeming possibilities of action; how many chasms he would find of wide and continued vacuity, and how many

interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered thro' the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time which it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intellectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labour of the hands and expedition of the feet.

For this reason, the ancient generals often found themselves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself, that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle.

—*Media inter prœlia semper*
Sideribus, cœlique plagis, superisque vacavi.

Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes
I trace the planets and survey the skies,

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present condition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation:

and by the natural frame of our bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that, as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pursuit, how it is to be cured of its defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure; my purpose being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality. Irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what it is a crime to do, it is a crime to think. Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked deed, a

man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude, but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning; and therefore I shall endeavour to shew what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they regard the

past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vigilance, who, perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of provision for the future; and therefore in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come; for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct is indisputably necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience, we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those

sentiments which the great Author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good or bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι
Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἐρίων τι ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν.
Πῆ παρεβῆν; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρώτου ἐπεξίθι. καὶ μετέπειτα,
Ἀείλα μὲν ἐκπρήξας ἐωιωλήσσεο χρηστὰ δὲ τέρπου.

"Let not sleep," says Pythagoras, "fall upon "thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the tran- "sactions of the past day. Where have I turned "aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? "What have I left undone, which I ought to "have done? Begin thus from the first act, "and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which "thou has done be troubled, and rejoice for the "good."

Our thoughts on present things being determined by the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions, which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
No spot or stain behind. MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is entangled. Futurity is the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their

train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connection with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it, *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular conditions till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's power for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led, though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfal covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the public more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good, to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they

escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

N° 9. TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1750.

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis.

MART.

Chuse what you are, no other state prefer.

ELPHINSTON.

It is justly remarked by Horace, that howsoever every man may complain occasionally of the hardships of his condition, he is seldom willing to change it for any other on the same level; for whether it be that he who follows an employment, made choice of it at first on account of its suitableness to his inclination; or that when accident or the determination of others, have placed him in a particular station, he, by endeavouring to reconcile himself to it, gets the custom of viewing it only on the fairest side; or whether every man thinks that class to which he belongs the most illustrious, merely because he has honoured it with his name; it is certain that, whatever be the reason, most men have a very strong and active prejudice in favour of their own vocation, always working upon their minds, and influencing their behaviour.

This partiality is sufficiently visible in every rank of the human species; but it exerts itself

more frequently and with greater force among those who have never learned to conceal their sentiments for reasons of policy, or to model their expressions by the laws of politeness; and therefore the chief contests of wit among artificers and handicraftsmen arise from a mutual endeavour to exalt one trade by depreciating another.

From the same principles are derived many consolations to alleviate the inconveniences to which every calling is peculiarly exposed. A blacksmith was lately pleasing himself at his anvil, with observing, that though his trade was hot and sooty, laborious and unhealthy, yet he had the honour of living by his hammer, he got his bread like a man; and if his son should rise in the world, and keep his coach, nobody could reproach him that his father was a tailor.

A man truly zealous for his fraternity, is never so irresistibly flattered, as when some rival calling is mentioned with contempt. Upon this principle, a linen-draper boasted that he had got a new customer, whom he could safely trust, for he could have no doubt of his honesty, since it was known, from unquestionable authority, that he was now filing a bill in chancery to delay payment for the clothes which he had worn the last seven years; and he himself had heard him declare in a public coffee-house, that he looked upon the whole generation of woollen-drapers to be such despicable wretches, that no gentleman ought to pay them.

It has been observed that physicians and lawyers are no friends to religion; and many conjectures have been formed to discover the reason of such

a combination between men who agree in nothing else, and who seem less to be affected, in their own provinces, by religious opinions, than any other part of the community. The truth is, very few of them have thought about religion; but they have all seen a parson; seen him in a habit different from their own, and therefore declared war against him. A young student, from the inns of court, who has often attacked the curate of his father's parish with such arguments as his acquaintances could furnish, and returned to town without success, is now gone down with a resolution to destroy him; for he has learned at last how to manage a prig, and if he pretends to hold him again to syllogism, he has a catch in reserve, which neither logic nor metaphysicks can resist.

> I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
> Will look aghast, when unforeseen destruction
> Pours in upon him thus.———

The malignity of soldiers and sailors against each other has been often experienced at the cost of their country; and, perhaps, no orders of men have an enmity of more acrimony, or longer continuance. When, upon our late successes at sea, some new regulations were concerted for establishing the rank of the naval commanders, a captain of foot very acutely remarked, that nothing was more absurd than to give any honorary rewards to seamen; "for honour," says he, "ought only to "be won by bravery, and all the world knows "that in a sea-fight there is no danger, and there"fore no evidence of courage."

But although this general desire of aggrandizing themselves by raising their profession, betrays men to a thousand ridiculous and mischievous acts of supplantation and detraction, yet as almost all passions have their good as well as bad effects, it likewise excites ingenuity, and sometimes raises an honest and useful emulation of diligence. It may be observed in general, that no trade had ever reached the excellence to which it is now improved, had its professors looked upon it with the eyes of indifferent spectators; the advances, from the first rude essays, must have been made by men who valued themselves for performances, for which scarce any other would be persuaded to esteem them.

It is pleasing to contemplate a manufacture rising gradually from its first mean state by the successive labours of innumerable minds; to consider the first hollow trunk of an oak, in which, perhaps, the shepherd could scarce venture to cross a brook swelled with a shower, enlarged at last into a ship of war, attacking fortresses, terrifying nations, setting storms and billows at defiance, and visiting the remotest parts of the globe. And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat, melted into a metalline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined, that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniencies of life, as would in time constitute a great part

of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of the wind; which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance, might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

This passion for the honour of a profession, like that for the grandeur of our own country, is to be regulated, not extinguished. Every man, from the highest to the lowest station, ought to warm his heart and animate his endeavours with the hopes of being useful to the world, by advancing the art which it is his lot to exercise; and for that end he must necessarily consider the whole extent of its application, and the whole weight of its importance. But let him not too readily imagine that another is ill employed, because, for want of fuller knowledge of his business, he is not able to comprehend its dignity. Every man ought to endeavour at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure

of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity. The philosopher may very justly be delighted with the extent of his views, and the artificer with the readiness of his hands; but let the one remember that, without mechanical performances, refined speculation is an empty dream, and the other, that without theoretical reasoning, dexterity is little more than a brute instinct.

N° 10. SATURDAY, APRIL 21. 1750.

Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo.

VIRG.

For trifling sports I quitted grave affairs.

THE number of correspondents which increases every day upon me, shews that my paper is at least distinguished from the common productions of the press. It is no less a proof of eminence to have many enemies than many friends, and I look upon every letter, whether it contains encomiums or reproaches, as an equal attestation of rising credit. The only pain which I can feel from my correspondence, is the fear of disgusting those whose letters I shall neglect; and therefore I take this opportunity of reminding them, that in disapproving their attempts, whenever it may happen, I only return the treatment which I often receive. Besides, many particular motives influence a writer, known only to himself, or his private friends; and it may be justly concluded, that, not all letters

which are postponed, are rejected, nor all that are rejected, critically condemned,

Having thus eased my heart of the only apprehension that sat heavy on it, I can please myself with the candour of Benevolus, who encourages me to proceed, without sinking under the anger of Flirtilla, who quarrels with me for being old and ugly, and for wanting both activity of body and sprightliness of mind; feeds her monkey with my lucubrations, and refuses any reconciliation, till I have appeared in vindication of masquerades. That she may not, however, imagine me without support, and left to rest wholly upon my own fortitude, I shall now publish some letters which I have received from men as well dressed, and as handsome, as her favourite; and others from ladies, whom I sincerely believe as young, as rich, as gay, as pretty, as fashionable, and as often toasted and treated as herself.

"A set of candid readers send their respects to "the Rambler, and acknowledge his merit in so "well beginning a work that may be of public "benefit. But, superior as his genius is to the "impertinences of a trifling age, they cannot help "a wish, that he would condescend to the weak- "ness of minds softened by perpetual amu[illegible]ents, "and now and then throw in, like his p[illegible]rs, "some papers of a gay and humorou[illegible] "fair a field now lies open, with to[illegible] "harvest of follies! let the cheer[illegible] "in her sickle, and singing at he[illegible] "her hair with red and blue."

" A Lady sends her compliments to the Ram-
" bler, and desires to know by what other name
" she may direct to him; what are his set of
" friends, his amusements; what his way of think-
" ing with regard to the living world and its
" ways; in short, whether he is a person now
" alive, and in town? If he be, she will do herself
" the honour to write to him pretty often, and
" hopes, from time to time, to be the better for
" his advice and animadversions; for his animad-
" versions on her neighbours at least. But, if he
" is a mere essayist, and troubles not himself with
" the manners of the age, she is sorry to tell him,
" that even the genius and correctness of an Ad-
" dison will not secure him from neglect."

No man is so much abstracted from common life, as not to feel a particular pleasure from the regard of the female world; the candid writers of the first billet will not be offended, that my haste to satisfy a lady has hurried their address too soon out of my mind, and that I refer them for a reply to some future paper, in order to tell this curious enquirer after my other name, the answer of a philosopher to a man, who, meeting him in the street, desired to see what he carried under his cloak; " I
" carry it there," says he, " that you may not see
" it." But, though she is never to know my name, she may often see my face; for I am of her opinion, that a diurnal writer ought to view the world, and that he who neglects his cotemporaries may be, with justice, neglected by them.

" Lady Racket sends compliments to the Ram-

" bler, and lets him know, she shall have cards at " her house every Sunday, the remainder of the " season, where he will be sure of meeting all the " good company in town. By this means she " hopes to see his papers interspersed with living " characters. She longs to see the torch of truth " produced at an assembly, and to admire the " charming lustre it will throw on the jewels, " complexions, and behaviour of every dear crea- " ture there."

It is a rule with me to receive every offer with the same civility as it is made; and, therefore, though lady Racket may have had some reason to guess that I seldom frequent card tables on Sundays, I shall not insist upon an exception, which may to her appear of so little force. My business has been to view, as opportunity was offered, every place in which mankind was to be seen; but at card-tables, however brilliant, I have always thought my visit lost, for I could know nothing of the company but their clothes and their faces. I saw their looks clouded at the beginning of every game with an uniform solicitude, now and then in its progress varied with a short triumph, at one time wrinkled with cunning, at another deadened with despondency, or by accident flushed with rage at the unskilful or unlucky play of a partner. From such assemblies, in whatever humour I happened to enter them, I was quickly forced to [illegible]; they were too trifling for me when I was [illegible] too dull when I was cheerful.

Yet I cannot but value myself [illegible] of regard from a lady who is no[illegible]

before the torch of truth. Let her not, however, consult her curiosity more than her prudence; but reflect a moment on the fate of Semele, who might have lived the favourite of Jupiter, if she could have been content without his thunder. It is dangerous for mortal beauty, or terrestial virtue, to be examined by too strong a light. The torch of truth shews much that we cannot, and all that we would not see. In a face dimpled with smiles, it has often discovered malevolence and envy, and detected under jewels and brocade, the frightful forms of poverty and distress. A fine hand of cards have changed before it into a thousand spectres of sickness, misery, and vexation; and immense sums of money, while the winner counted them with transport, have at the first glimpse of this unwelcome lustre vanished from before him. If her ladyship therefore designs to continue her assembly, I would advise her to shun such dangerous experiments, to satisfy herself with common appearances, and to light up her apartments rather with myrtle than the torch of truth.

" A modest young man sends his service to the " author of the Rambler, and will be very willing " to assist him in his work, but is sadly afraid of " being discouraged by having his first essay re- " jected, a disgrace he has wofully experienced in " every offer he had made of it to every new wri- " ter of every new paper; but he comforts himself " by thinking, without vanity, that this has been " from a peculiar favour of the muses, who saved " his performances from being buried in trash, and " reserved it to appear with lustre in the Rambler."

I am equally a friend to modesty and enterprize; and therefore shall think it an honour to correspond with a young man who possesses both in so eminent a degree. Youth is, indeed, the time in which these qualities ought chiefly to be found; modesty suits well with inexperience, and enterprise with health and vigour, and an extensive prospect of life. One of my predecessors has justly observed, that, though modesty has an amiable and winning appearance, it ought not to hinder the exertion of the active powers, but that a man should shew, under his blushes, a latent resolution. This point of perfection, nice as it is, my correspondent seems to have attained. That he is modest, his own declaration may evince; and, I think, the *latent resolution* may be discovered in his letter by an acute observer. I will advise him, since he so well deserves my precepts, not to be discouraged, though the Rambler should prove equally envious, or tasteless, with the rest of this fraternity. If his paper is refused, the presses of England are open,—let him try the judgment of the public. If, as it has sometimes happened in general combinations against merit, he cannot persuade the world to buy his works, he may present them to his friends; and if his friends are seized with the epidemical infatuation, and cannot find his genius, or will not confess it, let him then refer his cause to posterity, and reserve his labours for a wiser age.

Thus have I dispatched some of my correspondents in the usual manner, with fair wo[illegible] general civility. But to Flirtilla, the [illegible]illa,

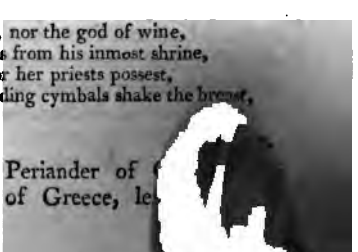
what shall I reply? Unable as I am to fly, at her command, over land and seas, or to supply her, from week to week, with the fashions of Paris, or the intrigues of Madrid, I am yet not willing to incur her further displeasure, and would save my papers from her monkey on any reasonable terms. By what propitiation, therefore, may I atone for my former gravity, and open, without trembling, the future letters of this sprightly persecutor? To write in defence of masquerades is no easy task; yet something difficult and daring may well be required as the price of so important an approbation. I therefore consulted, in this great emergency, a man of high reputation in gay life, who having added to his other accomplishments, no mean proficiency in the minute philosophy, after the fifth perusal of her letter, broke out with rapture into these words: "And can you, Mr. Rambler, stand "out against this charming creature? Let her "know, at least, that from this moment Nigrinus "devotes his life and his labours to her service. "Is there any stubborn prejudice of education, "that stands between thee and the most amiable "of mankind? Behold, Flirtilla, at thy feet, a "man grown grey in the study of those noble arts "by which right and wrong may be confounded; "by which reason may be blinded, when we have "a mind to escape from her inspection; and ca-"price and appetite instated in uncontrouled "command and boundless dominion! Such a ca-"suist may surely engage, with certainty of suc-"cess, in vindication of an entertainment, which in "an instant gives confidence to the timorous, and "kindles ardour in the cold; an entertainment

" where the vigilance of jealousy has so often been
" eluded, and the virgin is set free from the ne-
" cessity of languishing in silence; where all the
" outworks of chastity are at once demolished;
" where the heart is laid open without a blush;
" where bashfulness may survive virtue, and no
" wish is crushed under the frown of modesty.
" Far weaker influence than Flirtilla's might gain
" over an advocate for such amusements. It was
" declared by Pompey, that, if the commonwealth
" was violated, he could stamp with his foot, and
" raise an army out of the ground; if the rights of
" pleasure are again invaded, let but Flirtilla crack
" her fan, neither pens nor swords shall be want-
" ing at the summons; the wit and the colonel
" shall march out at her command, and neither
" law nor reason shall stand before us."

N° 11. TUESDAY, APRIL 24. 1750.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tristes ut iræ.—— HOR.

Yet Oh! remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor Pythian Phœbus from his inmost shrine,
Nor Dindymene, nor her priests possest,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger.



THE maxim which Periander of
of the seven sages of Greece, le

morial of his knowledge and benevolence, was χόλυ κρατει, *Be master of thy anger.* He considered anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of public happiness and private tranquillity; and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import, protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evils to which the life of man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle is left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantick and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject is such as makes those

who indulge it, more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto which characterises this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes, as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals, known, and contentedly known, by the appellation of *passionate men*, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on every slight occasion, and to vent their rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces and licentious reproaches. Their rage indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury and protestations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamours, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore, not always treated with the severity which their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indig-

nation, that men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment; wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, if it once breaks loose from reason, counteracts its own purposes. A passionate man, upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride, when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were borne, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occassions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence must shew him than he is mean enough to be driven from his post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagancies, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours, which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering that at least he made himself heard, that he had the

power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domesticks; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance, and therefore they endeavour, by their fury, to fright away contempt from before them, when they know it must follow them behind: and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things, that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconveniencies; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult, and bluster, alter any one's opinion of his standing, or gain influence, except over those whom fortune or nature have made his dependents. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have the comfort at last of thinking, that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and

must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who could not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality, and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance, will teach, in a short time, to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation, and unable to retain his resentment till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate, by some sudden transport, his dearest friend; or break out, upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solicitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyrick on the Duke of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any

indignities which he made them suffer. This is the round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong, because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise or his happiness; he only adds deliberate to hasty folly, aggravates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet, even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusements pall with frequent repetition, his occasional rage sinks, by decay of strength, into peevishness; that peevishness, for want of novelty and variety, becomes habitual; the world falls off from around him; and he is left, as Homer expresses it, φθινύθων φίλον κῆρ, to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

N° 12. SATURDAY, APRIL 28. 1750.

Miserum parva stipe focilat, ut pudibundos
Exercere sales inter convivia possit.
——Tu mitis, & acri
Asperitate carens, positoque per omnia fastu,
Inter ut æquales unus numeraris amicos,
Obsequiumque doces, & amorem quæris amando.

LUCANUS *ad* PISONEM.

Unlike the ribald, whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and rev'rence rev'rence gains.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty with which the life of a man of letters perhaps does not often make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has

been lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful law-suit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vilgilant enquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk-mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be; for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, and take care of a little Miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But Madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and

her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come of? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.——A great misfortune indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a-day!—So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman I suppose—such gentlewomen!—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your enquiry.——Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town; there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, Pray, Mrs Gentlewoman, troop down stairs. You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned, and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office, to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours, was at last admitted to the top of the

stairs, when she came out of the room, with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. So, young woman, you want a place, whence do you come?—From the country, Madam.—Yes, they all come from the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard? Where do you lodge?—At the Seven-Dials.—What, you never heard of the foundling-house! Upon this, they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards, but in two hours, I was told she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant, to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk. I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after, I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed, as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that shewed me in, Is this the lady that wants a place? Pray what place would you have, Miss? a maid of honour's place Servants now-a-days!—Madam, I heard you wanted—Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself! A pretty servant indeed—I should be afraid to speak to her—I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting—A servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head

person in this house.—You are ready dress'd, the taverns will be open.

I went to enquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up however. Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better.—Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk—Then these are your manners, with your blushes, and your courtesies to come to me in your worst gown. —Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other.—Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming—I could not let such a drab come near me—Here, you girl, that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me—such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk.

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all patience. However she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one, I was asked where I had lived? And upon my answer was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow her girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing——Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again. ——At sun-set the two first days I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow, and on the third, that her woman staid.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways; and if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many who had refused places, sell their clothes, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest, and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routes at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly called out, after a whisper, Stand facing the light that one may see you. I changed my place, and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment: for at every look they whispered, and laughed with the most violent

agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, Is that colour your own, child?—Yes, says the lady, if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth. This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to enquire what I could do? But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape: Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum? You would find your tongue, I suppose, in the kitchen.—No, no, says Mr. Courtly, the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder ——Come, child, hold up your head; what, you have stole nothing——Not yet, says the lady, but she hopes to steal your heart quickly.—Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself: Stole? no—but if I had her, I should watch her; for that downcast eye——Why cannot you look people in the face?—Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribbands before they were left off by her lady. Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury?—Insult, says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting? What will this world come to, if a gentlemen may not jest with a servant? Well, such servants! pray be gone, and see wheu you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted—a fine time——Insulted! Get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you.

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the waggon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for, like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for, with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me, that she sent for me, not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story; which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make

use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to shew my gratitude better than by giving this account to the RAMBLER.

ZOSIMA.

N° 13. TUESDAY, MAY 1, 1750.

Commissumque teges & vino tortus & ira.

HOR.

And let not wine or anger wrest
Th' intrusted secret from your breast.

FRANCIS.

IT is related by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived an invincible contempt of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy; for they thought, that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues at least were in his power; and though he perhaps could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In forming this opinion of the easiness of secrecy they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity; and to have conceived the man, whom they thus censured, not frighted by menaces to reveal, or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some other motive equally trifling, to lay open his heart without reflection, and to let whatever he

knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it. Whether by their settled and avowed scorn of thoughtless talkers, the Persians were able to diffuse to any great extent the virtue of taciturnity, we are hindered by the distance of those times from being able to discover, there being very few memoirs remaining of the court of Persepolis, nor any distinct accounts handed down to us of their office clerks, their ladies of the bed-chamber, their attorneys, their chamber-maids, or their footmen.

In these latter ages, though the old animosity against a prattler is still retained, it appears wholly to have lost its effect upon the conduct of mankind; for secrets are so seldom kept, that it may with some reason be doubted, whether the ancients were not mistaken in their first postulate, whether the quality of retention be so generally bestowed, and whether a secret has not some subtle volatility, by which it escapes imperceptibly at the smallest vent, or some power of fermentation, by which it expands itself so as to burst the heart that will not give it way.

Those that study either the body or the mind of man, very often find the most specious and pleasing theory falling under the weight of contrary experience; and instead of gratifying their vanity by inferring effects from causes, they are always reduced at last to conjecture causes from effects. That it is easy to be secret, the speculatist can demonstrate in his retreat, and therefore thinks himself justified in placing confidence; the man of the world knows, that, whether difficult or not, it is uncommon, and therefore finds himself rather inclined to

search after the reason of this universal failure in one of the most important duties of society.

The vanity of being known to be trusted with a secret is generally one of the chief motives to disclose it; for however absurd it may be thought to boast an honour by an act which shews that it was conferred without merit, yet most men seem rather inclined to confess the want of virtue than of importance, and more willingly shew their influence, though at the expence of their probity, than glide through life with no other pleasure than the private consciousness of fidelity; which, while it is preserved, must be without praise, except from the single person who tries and knows it.

There are many ways of telling a secret by which a man exempts himself from the reproaches of his conscience, and gratifies his pride, without suffering himself to believe that he impairs his virtue. He tells the private affairs of his patron, or his friend, only to those from whom he would not conceal his own; he tells them to those who have no temptation to betray the trust, or with a denunciation of a certain forfeiture of his friendship, if he discovers that they become public.

Secrets are very frequently told in the first ardour of kindness, or of love, for the sake of proving, by so important a sacrifice, sincerity or tenderness; but with this motive, though it be strong in itself, vanity concurs, since every man desires to be most esteemed by those whom he loves, or with whom he converses, with whom he passes his hours of pleasure, and to whom he retires from business and from care.

When the discovery of secrets is under consideration, there is always a distinction carefully to be made between our own and those of another; those of which we are fully masters, as they affect only our own interest, and those which are reposited with us in trust, and involve the happiness or convenience of such as we have no right to expose to hazard. To tell our own secret is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are entrused is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

There have, indeed, been some enthusiastic and irrational zealots for friendship, who have maintained, and perhaps believed, that one friend has a right to all that is in possession of another; and that therefore it is a violation of kindness to exempt any secret from this boundless confidence. Accordingly, a late female minister of state has been shameless enough to inform the world, that she used, when she wanted to extract any thing from her sovereign, to remind her of Montaigne's reasoning, who has determined, that to tell a secret to a friend is no breach of fidelity, because the number of persons trusted is not multiplied, a man and his friend being virtually the same.

That such a fallacy could be imposed upon any human understanding, or that an author could have advanced a position so remote from truth and reason any other ways than as a declaimer, to shew to what extent he could stretch his imagination, and with what strength he could press his principle, would scarcely have been credible, had not this lady kindly shewn us how far weakness may be

deluded, or indolence amused. But since it appears, that even this sophistry has been able, with the help of a strong desire to repose in quiet upon the understanding of another, to mislead honest intentions, and an understanding not contemptible, it may not be superfluous to remark, that those things which are common among friends are only such as either possesses in his own right, and can alienate or destroy without injury to any other person. Without this limitation, confidence must run on without end; the second person may tell the secret to the third, upon the same principle as he received it from the first; and the third may hand it forward to a fourth, till at last it is told in the round of friendship to them from whom it was the first intention to conceal it.

The confidence which Caius has of the faithfulness of Titius is nothing more than an opinion which himself cannot know to be true, and which Claudius, who first tells his secret to Caius, may know to be false; and therefore the trust is transferred by Caius, if he reveal what has been told him, to one from whom the person originally concerned would have withheld it; and whatever may be the event, Caius has hazarded the happiness of his friend, without necessity and without permission, and has put that trust in the hand of fortune, which was given only to virtue.

All the arguments upon which a man who is telling the private affairs of another may ground his confidence of security, he must upon reflection know to be uncertain, because he finds them without effect upon himself. When he is imagining that Titius will be cautious from a regard to his

interest, his reputation, or his duty, he ought to reflect that he is himself at that instant acting in opposition to all these reasons, and revealing what interest, reputation, and duty, direct him to conceal.

Every one feels that in his own case he should consider the man incapable of trust, who believed himself at liberty to tell whatever he knew to the first whom he should conclude deserving of his confidence; therefore Caius, in admitting Titius to the affairs imparted only to himself, must know that he violates his faith, since he acts contrary to the intention of Claudius, to whom that faith was given. For promises of friendship are, like all others, useless and vain, unless they are made in some known sense, adjusted and acknowledged by both parties.

I am not ignorant that many questions may be started relating to the duty of secrecy, where the affairs are of publick concern; where subsequent reasons may arise to alter the appearance and nature of the trust; that the manner in which the secret was told may change the degree of obligation; and that the principles upon which a man is chosen for a confident may not always equally constrain him. But these scruples, if not too intricate, are of too extensive consideration for my present purpose, nor are they such as generally occur in common life; and though casuistical knowledge be useful in proper hands, yet it ought by no means to be carelessly exposed, since most will use it rather to lull than awaken their own consciences; and the threads of reasoning, on which truth is suspended, are frequently drawn to such subtilty, that common eyes

cannot perceive, and common sensibility cannot feel them.

The whole doctrine, as well as practice of secrecy, is so perplexing and dangerous, that, next to him who is compelled to trust, I think him unhappy who is chosen to be trusted; for he is often involved in scruples without the liberty of calling in the help of any other understanding; he is frequently drawn into guilt, under the appearance of friendship and honesty; and sometimes subjected to suspicion by the treachery of others, who are engaged without his knowledge in the same schemes; for he that has one confident has generally more, and when he is at last betrayed, is in doubt on whom he shall fix the crime.

The rules therefore that I shall propose concerning secrecy, and from which I think it not safe to deviate, without long and exact deliberation, are—Never to solicit the knowledge of a secret—Not willingly, nor without many limitations, to accept such confidence when it is offered. When a secret is once admitted, to consider the trust as of a very high nature, important as society, and sacred as truth, and therefore not to be violated for any incidental convenience, or slight appearance of contrary fitness.

N° 14. SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1750.

——*Nil fuit unquam*
Sic dispar sibi——

HOR.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.

FRANCIS.

AMONG the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved, in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity: the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they ob-

serve those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

It has been long the custom of the oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught, than commanded by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer who, having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, enquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shewn much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws

to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life has his own passions, and those of others to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniencies, which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to chuse before he can examine; he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiassed, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summits of speculative virtue.

It is however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavours are to be directed; and he that is most deficient in the duties of life, makes some atonement for his faults, if he warns other

against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practise; since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive to amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing, that they do not know it; those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavouring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little increase or lessen the obligations of their dictates: argument is to be invalidated only by

argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty of every man to take care, lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should, shew that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility: Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others because he writes better, nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural enquiries: having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest by some flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety into disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not enforce his own maxims by his domestick cha-

racter, to conceal his name, that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters for the most part spends, in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the consciousness of his merit: he is either dissipated by the awe of company and unable to recollect his reading and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, disabled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds, and though he who excels in one might have been with opportunities and application

equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception, and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur, and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

N° 15. TUESDAY, MAY 8, 1750.

Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando
Major avaritiæ patuit sinus? Alea quando
Hos animos?

JUV.

What age so large a crop of vices bore,
Or when was avarice extended more?
When were the dice with more profusion thrown?

DRYDEN.

THERE is no grievance, public or private, of which, since I took upon me the office of a periodical monitor, I have received so many, or so earnest complaints, as of the predominance of play; of a fatal passion for cards and dice, which seems to have overturned, not only the ambition of excellence, but the desire of pleasure; to have extinguished the flames of the lover, as well as of the patriot; and threatens, in its further progress, to destroy all distinctions, both of rank and sex, to crush all emulation but that of fraud, to corrupt all those classes of our people whose ancestors have, by their virtue, their industry, or their parsimony, given them the power of living in extravagance, idleness, and vice, and to leave them without knowledge, but of the modish games, and without wishes, but for lucky hands.

I have found by long experience, that there are few enterprises so hopeless as contests with the fashion, in which the opponents are not only made

confident by their numbers and strong by their union, but are hardened by contempt of their antagonist, whom they always look upon as a wretch of low notions, contracted views, mean conversation, and narrow fortune,—who envies the elevations which he cannot reach, who would gladly imbitter the happiness which his inelegance or indigence deny him to partake, and who has no other end in his advice, than to revenge his own mortification by hindering those whom their birth and taste have set above him, from the enjoyment of their superiority, and bringing them down to a level with himself.

Though I have never found myself much affected by this formidable censure, which I have incurred often enough to be acquainted with its full force, yet I shall, in some measure, obviate it on this occasion, by offering very little in my own name, either of argument or intreaty, since those who suffer by this general infatuation may be supposed best able to relate its effects.

SIR,

THERE seems to be so little knowledge left in the world, and so little of that reflection practised, by which knowledge is to be gained, that I am in doubt, whether I shall be understood, when I complain of want of opportunity for thinking; or whether a condemnation, which at present seems irreversible, to perpetual ignorance, will raise any compassion either in you or your readers: yet I will venture to lay my state before you, because, I believe, it is natural to most minds, to take some

pleasure in complaining of evils, of which they have no reason to be ashamed.

I am the daughter of a man of great fortune, whose diffidence of mankind, and, perhaps, the pleasure of continual accumulation, incline him to reside upon his own estate, and to educate his children in his own house, where I was bred, if not with the most brilliant examples of virtue before my eyes, at least remote enough from any incitements to vice; and wanting neither leisure nor books, nor the acquaintance of some persons of learning in the neighbourhood, I endeavoured to acquire such knowledge as might most recommend me to esteem, and thought myself able to support a conversation upon most of the subjects which my sex and condition made it proper for me to understand.

I had, besides my knowledge, as my mamma and my maid told me, a very fine face and elegant shape; and with all these advantages had been seventeen months the reigning toast for twelve miles round, and never came to the monthly assembly, but I heard the old ladies that sat by wishing that *it might end well*, and their daughters criticising my air, my features, or my dress.

You know, Mr. Rambler, that ambition is natural to youth, and curiosity to understanding; and therefore will hear, without wonder, that I was desirous to extend my victories over those who might give more honour to the conqueror; and that I found in a country life a continual repetition of the same pleasures, which was not sufficient to fill up the mind for the present, or raise any expectations of the future; and I will confess to you,

that I was impatient for a sight of the town; and filled my thoughts with the discoveries which I should make, the triumphs that I should obtain, and the praises that I should receive.

At last the time came. My aunt, whose husband has a seat in parliament and a place at court, buried her only child, and sent for me to supply the loss.

The hope that I should so far insinuate myself into their favour, as to obtain a considerable augmentation of my fortune, procured me every convenience for my departure, with great expedition; and I could not, amidst all my transports, forbear some indignation to see with what readiness the natural guardians of my virtue sold me to a state, which they thought more hazardous than it really was, as soon as a new accession of fortune glittered in their eyes.

Three days I was upon the road, and on the fourth morning my heart danced at the sight of London. I was set down at my aunt's, and entered upon the scene of action. I expected now, from the age and experience of my aunt, some prudential lessons; but, after the first civilities and first tears were over, was told what pity is was to have kept so fine a girl so long in the country; for the people who did not begin young, seldom dealt their cards handsomely, or played them tolerably.

Young persons are commonly inclined to slight the remarks and counsels of their elders. I smiled, perhaps, with too much contempt, and was upon the point of telling her, that my time had not been passed in such trivial attainments. But I soon

found, that things are to be estimated not by the importance of their effects, but the frequency of their use.

A few days after, my aunt gave me notice that some company, which she had been six weeks in collecting, was to meet that evening, and she expected a finer assembly than had been seen all the winter. She expressed this in the jargon of a gamester, and when I asked an explanation of her terms of art, wondered where I had lived. I had already found my aunt so incapable of any rational conclusion, and so ignorant of every thing, whether great or little, that I had lost all regard to her opinion, and dressed myself with great expectations of an opportunity to display my charms among rivals, whose competition would not dishonour me. The company came in, and after the cursory compliments of salutation, alike easy to the lowest and the highest understanding, what was the result? The cards were broke upon, the parties were formed, the whole night passed in a game, upon which the young and old were equally employed; nor was I able to attract an eye, or gain an ear; but being compelled to play without skill, I perpetually embarrassed my partner, and soon perceived the contempt of the whole table gathering upon me.

I cannot but suspect, Sir, that this odious fashion is produced by a conspiracy of the old, the ugly, and the ignorant, against the young and beautiful, the witty and the gay, as a contrivance to level all distinctions of nature and of art, to confound the world in a chaos of folly, to take from those, who could outshine them, all the advantages of mind and

body, to withhold youth from its natural pleasures, deprive wit of its influence, and beauty of its charms, to fix those hearts upon money to which love has hitherto been entitled, to sink life into a tedious uniformity, and to allow it no other hopes or fears, but those of robbing and being robbed.

Be pleased, Sir, to inform those of my sex who have minds capable of nobler sentiments, that if they will unite in vindication of their pleasures and their prerogatives, they may fix a time at which cards shall cease to be in fashion, or be left only to those who have neither beauty to be loved, nor spirit to be feared; neither knowledge to teach, nor modesty to learn; and who, having passed their youth in vice, are justly condemned to spend their age in folly.

I am, Sir, &c.

CLEORA.

SIR,

VEXATION will burst my heart, if I do not give it vent. As you publish a paper, I insist upon it, that you insert this in your next, as ever you hope for the kindness and encouragement of any woman of taste, spirit, and virtue. I would have it published to the world, how deserving wives are used by imperious coxcombs, that henceforth no woman may marry, who has not the patience of Grizzel. Nay, if even Grizzel had been married to a gamester, her temper would never have held out. A wretch that loses his good-humour and humanity along with his money, and will not allow enough from his own extravagancies to support a woman of fashion in the necessary amusements of

life! —Why does not he employ his wise head to make a figure in parliament, rise an estate, and get a title? That would be fitter for the master of a family, than rattling a noisy dice-box; and then he might indulge his wife in a few slight expences and elegant diversions.

What if I was unfortunate at Brag?—Should he not have stayed to see how luck would turn another time? Instead of that, what does he do, but picks a quarrel, upbraids me with loss of beauty, abuses my acquaintance, ridicules my play, and insults my understanding; says, forsooth, that women have not heads enough to play with any thing but dolls, and that they should be employed in things proportionable to their understanding, keep at home, and mind family affairs.

I do stay at home, Sir, and all the world knows I am at home every Sunday. I have had six routes this winter, and sent out ten packs of cards in invitations to private parties. As for management, I am sure he cannot call me extravagant, or say I do not mind my family. The children are out at nurse in villages as cheap as any two little brats can be kept, nor have I ever seen them since; so that he has no trouble about them. The servants live at board wages. My own dinners come from the Thatch'd House; and I have never paid a penny for any thing I have bought since I was married. As for play, I do think I may, indeed, indulge in that, now I am my own mistress Papa made me drudge at Whist till I was tired of it; and, far from wanting a head, Mr. Hoyle, when he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of the best scholars. I thought then

with myself, that, if once I was at liberty, I would leave play, and take to reading romances, things so forbidden at our house, and so railed at, that it was impossible not to fancy them very charming. Most unfortunately, to save me from absolute undutifulness, just as I was married, came dear Brag into fashion, and ever since it has been the joy of my life; so easy, so cheerful and careless, so void of thought, and so genteel! Who can help loving it? Yet the perfidious thing has used me very ill of late, and to-morrow I should have changed it for Faro. But oh! this detestable to-morrow, a thing always expected, and never found.——Within these few hours must I be dragged into the country. The wretch, Sir, left me in a fit, which his threatnings had occasioned, and unmercifully ordered a post-chaise. Stay I cannot, for money I have none, and credit I cannot get——But I will make the monkey play with me at picquet upon the road for all I want. I am almost sure to beat him, and his debts of honour I know he will pay. Then who can tell but I may still come back and conquer lady Packer? Sir, you need not print this last scheme; and upon second thoughts, you may.—Oh distraction! the post-chaise is at the door. Sir, publish what you will, only let it be printed without a name.

N° 16. SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1750.

——*Multis dicendi copia torrens,*
Et sua mortifera est facundia——

JUV.

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd.

DRYDEN.

SIR,

I AM the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice in a late paper; and, as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniencies which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

You told me, as you thought, to my comfort, that a writer might easily find means of introducing his genius to the world, for the 'presses of 'England were open.' This I have now fatally experienced; the press is, indeed, open.

Facilis descensus Averni,
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis.

VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way.

DRYDEN.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for an impression of several thousands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the printing-house, and continually urged the workmen to haste, by solicitations, promises, and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets: and from the nights sleep generally was banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing nearer.

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable; and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state, by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me; I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked into the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon as more eminently beautiful than the

est; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegancies, I pointed out to them which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments, and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I, therefore, persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and chuse some other subject, on which I might share in the conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topick; and I was obliged to stifle with claret, that praise, which neither my modesty could hinder nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing

is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing myself exalted above the greatest names dead and living of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five and forty bottles of champagne.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing upon equal terms with the rest of the world. As soon as I enter the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal; sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts; and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrors of my friends. I have been cautious, since the appearance of my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may sometimes have laid down my opinion in a manner that shewed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments; and,

indeed, I did indulge myself for two days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when the company began to lose themselves in absurdities, or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss. But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, nobody is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude, by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendency.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk much without thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of error to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended, when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This, Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets broke

open, at the instigation of piratical booksellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent, that there are many prints now sold in the shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of sitting for that purpose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard, and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that shewed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house, but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painters are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat over my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confound them; for you know it is not fair to sell my face without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for my face as for my papers, which I dare neither carry with me nor leave behind. I have, indeed, taken some measures for their preservation, having put them in an iron chest, and fixed a padlock upon my closet. I change my lodgings five times a-week, and always remove at the dead of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having given too great proofs of a predominant genius, in the solitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a miser, and the caution of an outlaw; afraid to shew my face, lest it should be copied; afraid to speak, lest I should injure my character; and to write,

lest my correspondents should publish my letters; always uneasy lest my servants should steal my papers for the sake of money, or my friends for that of the publick. This it is to soar above the rest of mankind; and this representation I lay before you, that I may be informed how to divest myself of the laurels which are so cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to the enjoyment of that quiet from which I find a writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

MISELLUS.

N° 17. TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1750.

Me non oracula certum,
Sed mors certa facit. LUCAN.

Let those weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling priests for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fixt, my certain soul, from doubt has freed.
ROWE.

It is recorded of some eastern monarch, that he kept an officer in his house, whose employment it was to remind him of his mortality, by calling out every morning, at a stated hour, 'Remember, 'prince, that thou shalt die.' And the contemplation of the frailness and uncertainty of our present state appeared of so much importance to Solon of Athens, that he left this precept to future ages, 'Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life.'

A frequent and attentive prospect of that moment, which must put a period to all our schemes, and deprive us of all our acquisitions, is indeed of the utmost efficacy to the just and rational regulation of our lives; nor would ever any thing wicked, or often any thing absurd, be undertaken or prosecuted by him who should begin every day with a serious reflection that he is born to die.

The disturbers of our happiness in this world, are our desires, our griefs, and our fears; and to all these, the consideration of mortality is a certain and adequate remedy. Think, says Epictetus frequently on poverty, banishment, and death, and you will then never indulge violent desires, or give up thy heart to mean sentiments.

That the maxim of Epictetus is founded on just observation will easily be granted, when we reflect, how that vehemence of eagerness after the common objects of pursuit is kindled in our minds. We represent to ourselves the pleasures of some future possession, and suffer our thoughts to dwell attentively upon it, till it has wholly engrossed the imagination, and permits us not to conceive any happiness but its attainment, or any misery but its loss; every other satisfaction which the bounty of providence has scattered over life is neglected as inconsiderable, in comparison of the great object which we have placed before us, and is thrown from us as incumbering our activity, or trampled under foot as standing in our way.

Every man has experienced how much of this ardour has been remitted, when a sharp or tedious sickness has set death before his eyes. The ex-

tensive influence of greatness, the glitter of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance of supplicants, have appeared vain and empty things, when the last hour seemed to be approaching; and the same appearance they would always have, if the same thought was always predominant. We should then find the absurdity of stretching out our arms incessantly to grasp that which we cannot keep, and wearing out our lives in endeavours to add new turrets to the fabric of ambition when the foundation itself is shaking, and the ground on which it stands is mouldering away.

All envy is proportionate to desire; we are uneasy at the attainments of another, according as we think our own happiness would be advanced by the addition of that which he withholds from us; and therefore whatever depresses immoderate wishes, will, at the same, set the heart free from the corrosion of envy, and exempt us from that vice which is, above most others, tormenting to ourselves, hateful to the world, and productive of mean artifices and sordid projects. He that considers how soon he must close his life, will find nothing of so much importance as to close it well; and will, therefore, look with indifference upon whatever is useless to that purpose. Whoever reflects frequently upon the uncertainty of his own duration, will find out that the state of others is not more permanent, and that what can confer nothing on himself very desirable, cannot so much improve the condition of a rival, as to make him much superior to those from whom he has carried the prize, a prize too mean to deserve a very obstinate opposition.

Even grief, that passion to which the virtuous and tender mind is particularly subject, will be obviated or alleviated by the same thoughts. It will be obviated, if all the blessings of our condition are enjoyed with a constant sense of this uncertain tenure. If we remember, that whatever we possess is to be in our hands but a very little time, and that the little which our most lively hopes can promise us, may be made less by ten thousand accidents; we shall not much repine at a loss of which we cannot estimate the value, but of which, though we are not able to tell the least amount, we know, with sufficient certainty, the greatest, and are convinced that the greatest is not much to be regretted.

But if any passion has so much usurped our understanding, as not to suffer us to enjoy advantages with the moderation prescribed by reason, it is not too late to apply this remedy, when we find ourselves sinking under sorrow, and inclined to pine for that which is irrecoverably vanished. We may then usefully revolve the uncertainty of our own condition, and the folly of lamenting that from which, if it had stayed a little longer, we should ourselves have been taken away.

With regard to the sharpest and most melting sorrow, that which arises from the loss of those whom we have loved with tenderness, it may be observed, that friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time moura for the other's death: And this grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; for the pain,

whatever it be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.

Nor is fear, the most overbearing and resistless of all our passions, less to be temperated by this universal medicine of the mind. The frequent contemplation of death, as it shews the vanity of all human good, discovers likewise the lightness of all terrestrial evil, which certainly can last no longer than the subject upon which it acts; and according to the old observation, must be shorter, as it is more violent. The most cruel calamity which misfortune can produce, must, by the necessity of nature, be quickly at an end. The soul cannot long be held in prison, but will fly away, and leave a lifeless body to human malice.

——Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.

And soaring mocks the broken frame below.

The utmost that we can threaten to one another is that death, which, indeed, we may precipitate, but cannot retard, and from which, therefore, it cannot become a wise man to buy a reprieve at the expence of virtue, since he knows not how small a portion of time he can purchase; but knows, that, whether short or long, it will be made less valuable by the remembrance of the price at which it has been obtained. He is sure that he destroys his happiness, but is not sure that he lengthens his life.

The known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius, and most active in-

dustry, to extend its effects beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world, is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science, has been the folly of literary heroes; and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining a species of honour, which the eternal laws of providence have placed beyond the reach of man.

The miscarriages of the great designs of princes are recorded in the histories of the world, but are of little use to the bulk of mankind, who seem very little interested in admonitions against errors which they cannot commit. But the fate of learned ambition is a proper subject for every scholar to consider; for who has not had occasion to regret the dissipation of great abilities in a boundless multiplicity of pursuits, to lament the sudden desertion of excellent designs, upon the offer of some other subject made inviting by its novelty, and to observe the inaccuracy and deficiencies of works left unfinished by too great an extension of the plan?

It is always pleasing to observe how much more our minds can conceive than our bodies can perform; yet it is our duty, while we continue in this complicated state, to regulate one part of our composition by some regard to the other. We are not to indulge our corporeal appetites with pleasures that impair our intellectual vigour, nor gratify our minds with schemes which we know our lives must fail in attempting to execute. The uncertainty of our duration ought at once to set bounds to our

designs, and add incitements to our industry; and when we find ourselves inclined either to immensity in our schemes, or sluggishness in our endeavours, we may either check or animate ourselves, by recollecting, with the father of physick, *that art is long, and life is short.*

N° 18. SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1750.

Illic matre carentibus,
Privignis mulier temperat innocens.
Nec dotata regit virum
Conjux, nec nitido fidit adultero:
Dos est magna parentum
Virtus et metuens alterius viri
Certo fœdere castitas.

HORACE.

Not there the guiltless step-dame knows
The baleful draught for orphans to compose;
No wife high portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenc'd lover's faithless vows:
The lovers there for dow'ry claim
The father's virtue, and the spotless fame
Which dares not break the nuptial tie.

FRANCIS.

THERE is no observation more frequently made by such as employ themselves in surveying the conduct of mankind, than that marriage, though the dictate of nature, and the institution of providence, is yet very often the cause of misery; — and that those who have entered into that state can very seldom forbear to express their repent-

ance, and their envy of those whom either chance or caution hath withheld from it.

This general unhappiness has given occasion to many sage maxims among the serious, and smart remarks among the gay; the moralist and the writer of epigrams have equally shewn their abilities upon it; some have lamented, and some have ridiculed it; but as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the women, and the grave and the merry have equally thought themselves at liberty to conclude either with declamatory complaints, or satirical censures, of female folly or fickleness, ambition or cruelty, extravagance or lust.

Led by such number of examples, and incited by my share in the common interest, I sometimes venture to consider this universal grievance, having endeavoured to divest my heart of all partiality, and place myself as a kind of neutral being between the sexes, whose clamours, being equally vented on both sides with all the vehemence of distress, all the apparent confidence of justice, and all the indignation of injured virtue, seem entitled to equal regard. The men have, indeed, by their superiority of writing, been able to collect the evidence of many ages, and raise prejudices in their favour by the venerable testimonies of philosophers, historians, and poets; but the pleas of the ladies appeal to passions of more forcible operation than the reverence of antiquity. If they have not so great names on their side, they have stronger arguments; it is to little purpose that Socrates, or Euripides, are produced against the

sighs of softness and the tears of beauty. The most frigid and inexorable judge would, at least, stand suspended between equal powers, as Lucan was perplexed in the determination of the cause, where the deities were on one side, and Cato on the other.

But I, who have long studied the severest and most abstracted philosophy, have now, in the cool maturity of life, arrived at such command over my passions, that I can hear the vociferations of either sex without catching any of the fire from those that utter them. For I have found, by long experience, that a man will sometimes rage at his wife, when in reality his mistress has offended him; and a lady complain of the cruelty of her husband, when she has no other enemy than bad cards. I do not suffer myself to be any longer imposed upon by oaths on one side, or fits on the other; nor when the husband hastens to the tavern, and the lady retires to her closet, am I always confident that they are driven by their miseries; since I have sometimes reason to believe, that they purpose not so much to sooth their sorrows, as to animate their fury. But how little credit soever may be given to particular accusations, the general accumulation of the charge shews, with too much evidence, that married persons are not very often advanced in felicity; and therefore it may be proper to examine at what avenues so many evils have made their way into the world. With this purpose, I have reviewed the lives of my friends who have been least successful in connubial contracts, and attentively considered by what motives they were in-

cited to marry, and by what principles they regulated their choice.

One of the first of my acquaintances that resolved to quit the unsettled thoughtless condition of a batchelor, was Prudentius, a man of slow parts, but not without knowledge or judgment in things which he had leisure to consider gradually before he determined them. Whenever we met at a tavern, it was his province to settle the scheme of our entertainment, contract with the cook, and inform us when we had called for wine to the sum originally proposed. This grave considerer found, by deep meditation, that a man was no loser by marrying early, even though he contented himself with a less fortune; for, estimating the exact worth of annuities, he found that, considering the constant diminution of the value of life, with the probable fall of the interest of money, it was not worse to have ten thousand pounds at the age of two and twenty years, than a much larger fortune at thirty; for many opportunities, says he, occur of improving money, which if a man misses, he may not afterwards recover.

Full of these reflections, he threw his eyes about him, not in search of beauty or elegance, dignity or understanding, but of a woman with ten thousand pounds. Such a woman, in a wealthy part of the kingdom, it was not very difficult to find; and by artful management with her father, whose ambition was to make his daughter a gentlewoman, my friend got her, as he boasted to us in confidence two days after his marriage, for a settlement of seventy-three pounds a-year less than her fortune might have claimed, and less [illegible] him-

self have given, if the fools had been but wise enough to delay the bargain.

Thus at once delighted with the superiority of his parts, and the augmentation of his fortune, he caarried Furia to his own house, in which he never afterwards enjoyed one hour of happiness. For Furia was a wretch of mean intellects, violent passions, a strong voice, and low education, without any sense of happiness but that which consisted in eating and counting money. Furia was a scold. They agreed in the desire of wealth, but with this difference, that Prudentius was for growing rich by gain, Furia by parsimony. Prudentius would venture his money with chances very much in his favour; but Furia very wisely observing that what they had was, while they had it, *their own*, thought all traffick too great a hazard, and was for putting it out at low interest, upon good security. Prudentius ventured, however, to insure a ship, at a very unreasonable price; but happening to lose his money, was so tormented with the clamours of his wife, that he never durst try a second experiment. He has now grovelled seven and forty years under Furia's directions, who never once mentioned him, since his bad luck, by any other name than that of *the insurer*.

The next that married from our society was Florentius. He happened to see Zephyretta in a chariot at a horse race, danced with her at night, was confirmed in his first ardour, waited on her next morning, and declared himself her lover. Florentius had not knowledge enough of the world, to distinguish between the flutter of co-

quetry, and the sprightliness of wit, or between the smile of allurement, and that of cheerfulness. He was soon waked from his rapture by conviction, that his pleasure was but the pleasure of a day. Zephyretta had in four and twenty hours spent her stock of repartee, gone round the circle of her airs, and had nothing remaining for him but childish insipidity, or for herself, but the practice of the same artifices upon new men.

Melissus was a man of parts, capable of enjoying and of improving life. He had passed through the various scenes of gaiety with that indifference and possession of himself, natural to men who have something higher and nobler in their prospect. Retiring to spend the summer in a village little frequented, he happened to lodge in the same house with Ianthe, and was unavoidably drawn to some acquaintance, which her wit and politeness soon invited him to improve. Having no opportunity of any other company, they were always together; and as they owed their pleasures to each other, they began to forget that any pleasure was enjoyed before their meeting. Melissus, from being delighted with her company, quickly began to be uneasy in her absence, and being sufficiently convinced of the force of her understanding, and finding, as he imagined, such a conformity of temper as declared them formed for each other, addressed her as a lover; after no very long courtship obtained her for his wife, and brought her next winter to town in triumph.

Now began their infelicity. Melissus had only seen her in one scene, where there was no variety of objects to produce the proper excitements to

contrary desires. They had both loved solitude and reflection, where there was nothing but solitude and reflection to be loved; but when they came into public life, Ianthe discovered those passions, which accident rather than hypocrisy had hitherto concealed. She was, indeed, not without the power of thinking, but was wholly without the exertion of that power, when either gaiety or splendour played on her imagination. She was expensive in her diversions, vehement in her passions, insatiate of pleasure however dangerous to her reputation, and eager of applause by whomsoever it might be given. This was the wife which Melissus the philosopher found in his retirement, and from whom he expected an associate in his studies, and an assistant to his virtues.

Prosapius, upon the death of his younger brother, that the family might not be extinct, married his house-keeper, and has ever since been complaining to his friends that mean notions are instilled into his children, that he is ashamed to sit at his own table, and that his house is uneasy to him for want of suitable companions.

Avaro, master of a very large estate, took a woman of bad reputation, recommended to him by a rich uncle, who made that marriage the condition on which he should be his heir. Avaro now wonders to perceive his own fortune, his wife's and his uncle's insufficient to give him that happiness which is to be found only with a woman of virtue.

I intend to treat in more papers on this important article of life, and shall therefore, make no reflection upon these histories, except that all

whom I have mentioned failed to obtain happiness, for want of considering that marriage is the strictest tie of perpetual friendship; that there can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity; and that he must expect to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches, or politeness, that regard which only virtue and piety can claim.

N° 19. TUESDAY, MAY 22, 1750.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non decernis, Taure, quid esse velis,
Peleos & Priami transit, vel Nestoris etas,
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere——
Eja. age, rumpe moras quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil.

MART.

To rhetorick now, and now to law inclin'd,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind;
Old Priam's age or Nestor's may be out,
And thou, O Taurus, still go on in doubt.
Come then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou may'st doubt on; thou now can'st nothing be.

F. LEWIS.

It is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct or miscarriage of those men who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature, and privileged from the common infelicities of life.

Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for many years been making observations on the life of Polyphilus, a man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first appearance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discernment, and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but whose progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, have been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable at the school for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress as well through the thorny mazes of science, as the flowery path of politer literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually chuse their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to enquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that he would leave all his contemporaries behind

him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should enlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break upon it; nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those who, having shone a while, and drawn the eyes of the public upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicans, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which, after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to mantain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chemistry, and to leave no part unconquered either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried experiments; but unhappily as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea,

he met, in crossing Westminister to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physick for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place-book, and confined himself some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attornies, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study which was so narrow in its comprehension, that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only for money. The barenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other company at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he, by chance, mingled at a tavern with some in-

telligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gaiety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he therefore cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make him so long insensible of that ambition which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with the ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seemed to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of adventures, and accounts of foreign countries; and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life, in which all his views could so completely concenter as in that of a soldier. In the art of war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in the principles of tacticks or fortification; he therefore studied all the military writers both ancient and modern, and in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost

from the beginning of the world. He often shewed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal error at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He entrenched armies upon paper so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time obtained a commission; but before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of military vivacity, a war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action that terror which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw, that instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a-month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him, within this last half year, decyphering the

Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself. He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before him; but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way; and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of consulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be dicovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early dis-

cerned. At least, if to miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore, no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned bishop Sanderson, that, when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading he was often forced to produce not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be useful to few other purposes than to warn others against the same folly, and to shew, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who chuses earliest chuses best.

N°. 20. SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1750.

Ad populum phaleras, ego te intus, et in cute novi.
PERSIUS.

Such pageantry be to the people shewn;
There boast thy horse's trappings and thy own;
I know thee to thy bottom, from within
Thy shallow centre to thy outmost skin.
DRYDEN.

AMONG the numerous stratagems by which pride endeavours to recommend folly to regard, there is scarcely one that meets with less success than affectation, or a perpetual disguise of the real character by fictitious appearances; whether it be that every man hates falsehood from the natural congruity of truth to his faculties of reason, or that every man is jealous of the honour of his understanding, and thinks his discernment consequently called in question, whenever any thing is exhibited under a borrowed form.

This aversion from all kinds of disguise, whatever be its cause, is universally diffused, and incessantly in action; nor is it necessary, that to exasperate detection, or excite contempt, any interest should be invaded, or any competition attempted; it is sufficient, that there is an intention to deceive, an intention which every heart swells to oppose, and every tongue is busy to detect.

This reflection was awakened in my mind by a very common practice among my correspondents, of writing under characters which they cannot support, which are of no use to the explanation or

enforcement of that which they describe or recommend; and which, therefore, since they assume them only for the sake of displaying their abilities, I will advise them for the future to forbear as laborious without advantage.

It is almost a general ambition of those who favour me with their advice for the regulation of my conduct, or their contribution for the assistance of my understanding, to affect the style and the names of ladies. And I cannot always withhold some expression of anger, like Sir Hugh in the comedy, when I happen to find that a woman has a beard. I must therefore warn the gentle Phyllis, that she send me no more letters from the Horse-Guards: and require of Belinda, that she be content to resign her pretensions to female elegance, till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politicks of Batson's coffee-house. I must indulge myself in the liberty of observation, that there were some allusions in Chloris's production, sufficient to shew that Bracton and Plowden are her favourite authors; and that Euphelia has not been long enough at home, to wear out all the traces of the phraseology which she learned in the expedition to Carthagena.

Among all my female friends, there was none who gave me more trouble to decypher her true character, than Penthesilea, whose letter lay upon my desk three days before I could fix upon the real writer. There was a confusion of images, and medley of barbarity, which held me long in suspence; till by perseverance I disentangled the perplexity, and found, that Penthesilea is the son of a wealthy stock-jobber, who spends his morn-

ing under his father's eye, in Change-Alley, dines at a tavern in Covent-Garden, passes his evening in the play-house, and part of the night at a gaming-table, and having learned the dialects of these various regions, has mingled them all in a studied composition.

When Lee was once told by a critick, that it was very easy to write like a madman; he answered, that it was difficult to write like a madman, but easy enough to write like a fool; and I hope to be excused by my kind contributors, if in imitation of this great author, I presume to remind them, that it is much easier not to write like a man, than to write like a woman.

I have, indeed, some ingenious well-wishers, who without departing from their sex, have found very wonderful appellations. A very smart letter has been sent me from a puny ensign, signed Ajax Telamonius; another in recommendation of a new treatise upon cards, from a gamester who calls himself Sesostris; and another upon the improvements of the fishery, from Dioclesian; but as these seem only to have picked up their appellations by chance, without endeavouring at any particular imposture, their improprieties are rather instances of blunder than of affectation, and are therefore not equally fitted to inflame the hostile passions; for it is not folly but pride, not error but deceit, which the world means to persecute, when it raises the full cry of nature to hunt down affectation.

The hatred which dissimulation always draws upon itself, is so great, that if I did not know how much cunning differs from wisdom, I should wonder that any men have so little knowledge of

their own interest, as to aspire to wear a mask for life; to try to impose upon the world a character, to which they feel themselves void of any just claim; and to hazard their quiet, their fame, and even their profit, by exposing themselves to the danger of that reproach, malevolence, and neglect, which such a discovery as they have always to fear will certainly bring upon them.

It might be imagined, that the pleasure of reputation should consist in the satisfaction of having our opinion of our own merit confirmed by the suffrage of the publick; and that to be extolled for a quality which a man knows himself to want, should give him no other happiness than to be mistaken for the owner of an estate, over which he chances to be travelling. But he who subsists upon affectation knows nothing of this delicacy; like a desperate adventurer in commerce, he takes up reputation upon trust, mortgages possessions which he never had, and enjoys, to the fatal hour of bankruptcy, though with a thousand terrors and anxieties, the unnecessary splendour of borrowed riches.

Affectation is to be always distinguished from hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might, with innocence and safety be known to want. Thus the man, who, to carry on any fraud, or to conceal any crime, pretends to rigours of devotion and exactness of life, is guilty of hypocrisy; and his guilt is greater, as the end for which he puts on the false appearance is more pernicious. But he that, with an awkward address, and unpleasing countenance, boasts of the conquests made by him among the la-

dies, and counts over the thousands which he might have possessed, if he would have submitted to the yoke of matrimony, is chargeable only with affectation. Hypocrisy is the necessary burthen of villany, affectation part of the chosen trappings of folly; the one completes a villain, the other only finishes a fop. Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.

With the hypocrite it is not at present my intention to expostulate, though even he might be taught the excellency of virtue, by the necessity of seeming to be virtuous; but the man of affectation may, perhaps, be reclaimed, by finding how little he is likely to gain by perpetual constraint and incessant vigilance, and how much more securely he might make his way to esteem, by cultivating real, than displaying counterfeit qualities.

Every thing future is to be estimated by a wise man, in proportion to the probability of attaining it, and its value when attained; and neither of these considerations will much contribute to the encouragement of affectation. For, if the pinnacles of fame be, at best, slippery, how unsteady must his footing be who stands upon pinnacles without foundation! If praise be made, by the inconstancy and maliciousness of those who must confer it, a blessing which no man can promise himself from the most conspicuous merit and vigorous industry, how faint must be the hope of gaining it, when the uncertainty is multiplied by the weakness of the pretensions! He that pursues fame with just claims, trusts his happiness to the winds; but he that endeavours after it by false

merit, has to fear, not only the violence of the storm, but the leaks of his vessel. Though he should happen to keep above water for a time, by the help of a soft breeze and a calm sea, at the first gust he must inevitably founder, with this melancholy reflection, that if he would have been content with his natural station, he might have escaped his calamity. Affectation may possibly succeed for a time, and a man may, by great attention, persuade others, that he really has the qualities which he presumes to boast; but the hour will come when he should exert them, and then, whatever he enjoyed in praise, he must suffer in reproach.

Applause and admiration are by no means to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore any indirect arts to obtain them have very little claim to pardon or compassion. There is scarcely any man without some valuable or improveable qualities, by which he might always secure himself from contempt. And perhaps exemption from ignominy is the most eligible reputation, as freedom from pain is, among some philosophers, the definition of happiness.

If we therefore compare the value of the praise obtained by fictitious excellence, even while the cheat is yet undiscovered, with that kindness which every man may suit by his virtue, and that esteem to which most men may rise by common understanding steadily and honestly applied, we shall find, that when from the adscititious happiness all the deductions are made by fear and casualty, there will remain nothing equiponderant to the security of truth. The state of the possessor of humble

virtue, to the affecter of great excellencies, is tha of a small cottage of stone, to the palace raised with ice by the empress of Russia; it was for a time splendid and luminous, but the first sunshine melted it to nothing.

N° 21. TUESDAY, MAY 27. 1750.

Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes,
Nutrit; & urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est.

OVID.

Our bane and physick the same earth bestows,
And near the noisome nettle blooms the rose.

EVERY man is prompted by the love of himself to imagine, that he possesses some qualities, superior, either in kind or in degree, to those which he sees allotted to the rest of the world; and, whatever apparent disadvantages he may suffer in the comparision with others, he has some invisible distinctions, some latent reserve of excellence, which he throws into the balance, and by which he generally fancies that it is turned in his favour.

The studious and speculative part of mankind always seem to consider their fraternity as placed in a state of opposition to those who are engaged in the tumult of public business; and have pleased themselves, from age to age, with celebrating the felicity of their own condition, and with recount-

ing the perplexity of politicks, the dangers of greatness, the anxieties of ambition, and the miseries of riches.

Among the numerous topicks of declamation that their industry has discovered on this subject, there is none which they press with greater efforts, or on which they have more copiously laid out their reason and their imagination, than the instability of high stations, and the uncertainty with which the profits and honours are possessed, that must be acquired with so much hazard, vigilance, and labour.

This they appear to consider as an irrefragable argument against the choice of the statesman and the warrior; and swell with confidence of victory, thus furnished by the muses with the arms which never can be blunted, and which no art or strength of their adversaries can elude or resist.

It was well known by experience to the nations which employed elephants in war, that though, by the terror of their bulk, and the violence of their impression, they often threw the enemy into disorder, yet there was always danger in the use of them, very nearly equivalent to the advantage; for if their first charge could be supported, they were easily driven back upon their confederates; they then broke through the troops behind them, and made no less havock in the precipitation of their retreat, than in the fury of their onset.

I know not whether those who have so vehemently urged the inconveniences and danger of an active life, have not made use of arguments that may be retorted with equal force upon themselves;

and whether the happiness of a candidate for literary fame be not subject to the same uncertainty with that of him who governs provinces, commands armies, presides in the senate, or dictates in the cabinet.

That eminence of learning is not to be gained without labour, at least equal to that which any other kind of greatness can require, will be allowed by those who wish to elevate the character of a scholar; since they cannot but know, that every human acquisition is valuable in proportion to the difficulty employed in its attainment. And that those who have gained the esteem and veneration of the world by their knowledge or their genius, are by no means exempt from the solicitude which any other kind of dignity produces, may be conjectured from the innumerable artifices which they make use of to degrade a superior, to repress a rival, or obstruct a follower; artifices so gross and mean, as to prove evidently how much a man may excel in learning, without being either more wise or more virtuous than those whose ignorance he pities or despises.

Nothing therefore remains, by which the student can gratify his desire of appearing to have built his happiness on a more firm basis than his antagonist, except the certainty with which his honours are enjoyed. The garlands gained by the heroes of literature must be gathered from summits equally difficult to climb with those that bear the civic or triumphal wreaths; they must be worn with equal envy, and guarded with equal care from those hands that are always employed in efforts to tear them away: the only remaining hope is, that

their verdure is more lasting, and that they are less likely to fade by time, or less obnoxious to the blasts of accident.

Even this hope will receive very little encouragement from the examination of the history of learning, or observation of the fate of scholars in the present age. If we look back into past times, we find innumerable names of authors once in high reputation, read perhaps by the beautiful, quoted by the witty, and commented by the grave; but of whom we now know only that they once existed. If we consider the distribution of literary fame in our own time, we shall find it a possession of very uncertain tenure; sometimes bestowed by a sudden caprice of the public, and again transferred to a new favourite, for no other reason than that he is new; sometimes refused to long labour and eminent desert, and sometimes granted to very slight pretensions; lost sometimes by security and negligence, and sometimes by too diligent endeavours to retain it.

A successful author is equally in danger of the diminution of his fame, whether he continues or ceases to write. The regard of the public is not to be kept but by tribute, and the remembrance of past service will quickly languish unless successive performances frequently revive it. Yet in every new attempt there is new hazard, and there are few who do not at some unlucky time, injure their own characters by attempting to enlarge them.

There are many possible causes of that inequality which we may so frequently observe in the performances of the same man, from the influence of which no ability or industry is sufficiently se-

cured, and which have so often sullied the splendour of genius, that the wit, as well as the conqueror, may be properly cautioned not to indulge his pride with too early triumphs, but to defer to the end of his life his estimate of happiness.

———*Ultima semper*
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded blest before he die.

ADDISON.

Among the motives that urge an author to undertakings by which his reputation is impaired, one of the most frequent must be mentioned with tenderness, because it is not to be counted among his follies, but his miseries. It very often happens that the works of learning or of wit are performed at the direction of those by whom they are to be rewarded; the writer has not always the choice of his subject, but is compelled to except any task which is thrown before him, without much consideration of his own convenience, and without time to prepare himself by previous studies.

Miscarriages of this kind are likewise frequently the consequence of that acquaintance with the great, which is generally considered as one of the chief privileges of literature and genius. A man who has once learned to think himself exalted by familiarity with those from nothing but their birth, or their fortunes, or such stations as are seldom gained by moral excellence, set above him, will not be long without submitting his understand-

ing to their conduct; he will suffer them to prescribe the course of his studies, and employ him for their own purposes either of diversion or interest. His desire of pleasing those whose favour he has weakly made necessary to himself, will not suffer him always to consider how little he is qualified for the work imposed. Either his vanity will tempt him to conceal his deficiencies, or that cowardice, which always encroaches fast upon such as spend their lives in the company of persons higher than themselves, will not leave him resolution to assert the liberty of choice.

But, though we suppose that a man by his fortune can avoid the necessity of dependence, and by his spirit can repel the usurpations of patronage, yet he may easily, by writing long, happen to write ill. There is a general succession of events in which contrarieties are produced by periodical vicissitudes; labour and care are rewarded with success, success produces confidence, confidence relaxes industry, and negligence ruins that reputation which accuracy had raised.

He that happens not to be lulled by praise into supineness, may be animated by it to undertakings above his strength, or incited to fancy himself alike qualified for every kind of composition, and able to comply with the public taste through all its variations. By some opinion like this, many men have been engaged, at an advanced age, in attempts which they had not time to complete, and after a few weak efforts, sunk into the grave with vexation to see the rising generation gain ground upon them. From these failures the highest ge-

nius is not exempt; that judgment which appears so penetrating, when it is employed upon the works of others, very often fails where interest or passion can exert their power. We are blinded in examining our own labours by innumerable prejudices. Our juvenile compositions please us, because they bring to our minds the remembrance of youth; our later performances we are ready to esteem, because we are unwilling to think that we have made no improvement; what flows easily from the pen charms us, because we read with pleasure that which flatters our opinion of our own powers; what was composed with great struggles of the mind we do not easily reject, because we cannot bear that so much labour should be fruitless. But the reader has none of these prepossessions, and wonders that the auther is so unlike himself, without considering that the same soil will, with different culture, afford different products.

N° 22. SATURDAY, JUNE 2. 1750.

Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium, alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, & conjurat amice.

HOR.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.

ELPHINSTON.

WIT and LEARNING were the children of Apollo, by different mothers; WIT was the offspring of EUPHROSYNE, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity; LEARNING was born of SOPHIA, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the maternal animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of exerting it. No sooner were they of age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than WIT began to entertain Venus at her toilet by aping the solemnity of LEARNING, and LEARNING to divert Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of WIT.

Thus they grew up, with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronise and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were both, with the usual solemnities, received into the class of superior deities, and allowed to take nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from that hour CONCORD lost her authority at the table of Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their new dignity, and incited by the alternate applauses of the associate powers, harassed each other by incessant contests, with such a regular vicissitude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that at the beginning of every debate, the advantage was on the side of WIT; and that, at the first sallies, the whole assembly sparkled, according to Homer's expression, with unextinguishable merriment. But LEARNING would reserve her strength till the burst of applause was over, and the langour, with which the violence of joy is always succeeded, began to promise more calm and patient attention. She then attempted her defence; and by comparing one part of her antagonist's objections with another, commonly made him confute himself; or by shewing how small a part of the question he had taken into his view, proved that his opinion could have no weight.

The audience began gradually to lay aside their prepossessions, and rose, at last, with great veneration for LEARNING, but with greater kindness for WIT.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired to recommend themselves to distinction, entirely opposite. WIT was daring and adventurous; LEARNING cautious and deliberate. WIT thought nothing reproachful but dulness; LEARNING was afraid of no imputation but that of error. WIT answered before he understood, lest his quickness of apprehension should be questioned; LEARNING paused, where there was no difficulty, lest any insidious sophism should lie undiscovered. WIT perplexed every debate by rapidity and confusion; LEARNING tired the hearers with endless distinctions, and prolonged the dispute without advantage, by proving that which never was denied. WIT, in hopes of shining, would venture to produce what he had not considered, and often succeeded beyond his own expectation, by following the train of a lucky thought; LEARNING would reject every new notion, for fear of being intangled in consequences which she could not foresee, and was often hindered, by her caution, from pressing her advantages, and subduing her opponent.

Both had prejudices, which in some degree hindered their progress towards perfection, and left them open to attacks. Novelty was the darling of WIT, and antiquity of LEARNING. To WIT, all that was new was specious; to LEARNING, whatever was ancient was venerable. WIT, however seldom failed to divert those whom he could not convince, and to convince was not often his ambition;

LEARNING always supported her opinion with so many collateral truths, that, when the cause was decided against her, her arguments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. WIT would sometimes labour a syllogism, and LEARNING distort her features with a jest; but they always suffered by the experiment, and betrayed themselves into confutation or contempt. The seriousness of WIT was without dignity, and the merriment of LEARNING without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. WIT was taken into protection of the laughter-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of SMILES and JESTS, and was often permitted to dance among the GRACES. LEARNING still continued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace, without a train of the severer virtues. CHASTITY, TEMPERANCE, FORTITUDE, and LABOUR. WIT, cohabiting with MALICE, had a son named SATYR, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at LEARNING, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse enquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva, therefore, deputed CRITICISM to her aid, who generally broke the point of SATYR'S

arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry, that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither, therefore, they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals; nor was either long without zealous votaries. WIT, by his gaiety, captivated the young; and LEARNING, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects; theatres were built for the reception of WIT, and colleges endowed for the residence of LEARNING. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion that it was necessary, from the first entrance into life, to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom WIT and LEARNING were equally disregarded:— These were the devotees of Plutus, the god of riches. Among these it seldom happened, that the gaiety of WIT could raise a smile, or the eloquence of LEARNING procure attention. In revenge of this contempt, they agreed to incite their followers against them: but the forces that were sent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received, flattered the rich in publick, while they scorned them in their hearts; and when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of superiority on those

who still remained in the service of WIT and LEARNING.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for re-admission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. WIT readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far, was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the ethereal spaces. LEARNING, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour could only take short flights: so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned, from their mutual distress, the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands, and renewed their flight; LEARNING was borne up by the vigour of WIT, and WIT guided by the perspicacity of LEARNING. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. WIT persuaded LEARNING to converse with the GRACES, and LEARNING engaged WIT in the service of the VIRTUES. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of ARTS and SCIENCES.

N° 23. TUESDAY, JUNE 5. 1750.

Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur;
Poscentur vario multum diversa palato.

HOR.

Three guests I have, dissenting at my feast,
Requiring each to gratify his taste
With diff'rent food.

FRANCIS.

THAT every man should regulate his actions by his own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence; justified not only by the suffrage of reason, which declares that none of the gifts of Heaven are to lie useless, but by the voice likewise of experience, which will soon inform us, that, if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcileable judgments, be held in perpetual suspence between contrary impulses, and consult for ever without determination.

I know not whether, for the same reason, it is not necessary for an author to place some confidence in his own skill, and to satisfy himself in the knowledge that he has not deviated from the established laws of composition, without submitting his works to frequent examinations before he gives them to the public, or endeavouring to secure success by a solicitous conformity to advice and criticism.

It is, indeed, quickly discoverable, that consultation and compliance can conduce little to the perfection of any literary performance; for whoever is so doubtful of his own abilities as to encourage the remarks of others, will find himself every day embarrassed with new difficulties, and will harass his mind, in vain, with the hopeless labour of uniting heterogeneous ideas, digesting independent hints, and collecting into one point the several rays of borrowed light, emitted often with contrary directions.

Of all authors, those who retail their labours in periodical sheets would be most unhappy, if they were much to regard the censures or the admonitions of their readers; for as their works are not sent into the world at once, but by small parts in gradual succession, it is always imagined, by those who think themselves qualified to give instructions, that they may yet redeem their former failings by hearkening to better judges, and supply the deficiencies of their plan, by the help of the criticisms which are so liberally afforded.

I have had occasion to observe, sometimes with vexation, and sometimes with merriment, the different temper with which the same man reads a printed and manuscript performance. When a book is once in the hands of the public, it is considered as permanent and unalterable; and the reader, if he be free from personal prejudices, takes it up with no other intention than of pleasing or instructing himself; he accommodates his mind to the author's design; and having no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered him, never interrupts his own tranquillity by studied cavils, or

destroys his satisfaction in that which is already well, by an anxious inquiry how it might be better; but is often contented without pleasure, and pleased without perfection.

But if the same man be called to consider the merit of a production yet unpublished, he brings an imagination heated with objections to passages, which he has yet never heard; he invokes all the powers of criticism, and stores his memory with Taste and Grace, Purity and Delicacy, Manners and Unities, sounds which, having been once uttered by those that understood them, have been since re-echoed without meaning, and kept up to the disturbance of the world, by a constant repercussion from one coxcomb to another. He considers himself as obliged to shew, by some proof of his abilities, that he is not consulted to no purpose, and therefore watches every opening for objection, and looks round for every opportunity to propose some specious alteration. Such opportunities a very small degree of sagacity will enable him to find; for in every work of imagination, the disposition of parts, the insertion of incidents, and use of decorations, may be varied a thousand ways with equal propriety; and as in things nearly equal, that will always seem best to every man which he himself produces, the critick, whose business is only to propose, without the care of execution, can never want the satisfaction of believing that he has suggested very important improvements, nor the power of enforcing his advice by arguments, which as they appear convincing to himself, either his kindness or his vanity will press obstinately and importunately, without suspicion that he may pos-

sibly judge too hastily in favour of his own advice, or inquiry whether the advantage of the new scheme be proportionate to the labour.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that an orator ought not so much to select the strongest arguments which his cause admits, as to employ all which his imagination can afford; for, in pleading, those reasons are of most value, which will most affect the judges; and the judges, says he, will be always most touched with that which they had before conceived. Every man who is called to give his opinion of a performance, decides upon the same principle; he first suffers himself to form expectations, and then is angry at his disappointment. He lets his imagination rove at large, and wonders that another, equally unconfined in the boundless ocean of possibility, takes a different course.

But though the rule of Pliny be judiciously laid down, it is not applicable to the writer's cause, because there always lies an appeal from domestick criticism to a higher judicature; and the public, which is never corrupted, nor often deceived, is to pass the last sentence upon literary claims.

Of the great force of preconceived opinions I had many proofs, when I first entered upon this weekly labour. My readers having, from the performances of my predecessors, established an idea of unconnected essays, to which they believed all future authors under a necessity of conforming, were impatient of the least deviation from their system, and numerous remonstrances were accordingly made by each, as he found his favourite subject omitted or delayed. Some were angry that

the RAMBLER did not, like the SPECTATOR, introduce himself to the acquaintance of the publick, by an account of his own birth and studies, an enumeration of his adventures, and a description of his physiognomy. Others soon began to remark that he was a solemn, serious, dictatorial writer, without sprightliness or gaiety, and called out with vehemence for mirth and humour. Another admonished him to have a special eye upon the various clubs of this great city, and informed him that much of the Spectator's vivacity was laid out upon such assemblies. He has been censured for not imitating the politeness of his predecessors, having hitherto neglected to take the ladies under his protection, and give them rules for the just opposition of colours, and the proper dimensions of ruffles and pinners. He has been required by one to fix a particular censure upon those matrons who play at cards with spectacles; and another is very much offended whenever he meets with a speculation, in which naked precepts are comprised, without the illustration of examples and characters.

I make not the least question that all these monitors intend the promotion of my design, and the instruction of my readers; but they do not know, or do not reflect, that an author has a rule of choice peculiar to himself; and selects those subjects which he is best qualified to treat, by the course of his studies, or the accidents of his life; that some topicks of amusement have been already treated with too much success to invite a competition; and that he who endeavours to gain many readers must try various arts of invitatson, essay

every avenue of pleasure, and make frequent changes in his methods of approach.

I cannot but consider myself, amidst this tumult of criticism, as a ship in a poetical tempest, impelled at the same time by opposite winds, and dashed by the waves from every quarter, but held upright by the contrariety of the assailants, and secured, in some measure, by multiplicity of distress. Had the opinion of my censurers been unanimous it might perhaps have overset my resolution; but since I find them at variance with each other, I can, without scruple, neglect them, and endeavour to gain the favour of the public by following the direction of my own reason, and indulging the sallies of my own imagination.

N° 24. SATURDAY, JUNE 9. 1750.

Nemo in sese tentat descendere.

PERSIUS.

None, none descends into himself.

DRYDEN.

AMONG the precepts, or aphorisms, admitted by general consent, and inculcated by frequent repetition, there is none more famous among the masters of ancient wisdom, than that compendious lesson, Γνωθι σεαυτον, *Be acquainted with thyself*; ascribed by some to an oracle, and by others to Chilo of Lacedemon.

This is, indeed, a dictate which, in the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our orignal, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?

It is however very improbable that the first author, whoever he was, intended to be understood in this unlimited and complicated sense; for of the inquiries, which in so large an acceptation it would seem to recommend, some are too extensive for the powers of man, and some require light from above, which was not yet indulged to the heathen world.

We might have had more satisfaction concerning the original import of this celebrated sentence, if history had informed us, whether it was uttered as a general instruction to mankind, or as a particular caution to some private inquirer; whether it was applied to some single occasion, or laid down as the universal rule of life.

There will occur, upon the slightest consideration, many possible circumstances, in which this monition might very properly be enforced; for every error in human conduct must arise from ignorance in ourselves, either perpetual or temporary; and happen either because we do not know what is best and fittest, or because our knowledge is at the time of action not present to the mind.

When a man employs himself upon remote and unnecessary subjects, and wastes his life upon questions which cannot be resolved, and of which the solution would conduce very little to the advancement of happiness; when he lavishes his hours in

calculating the weight of the terraqueous globe, or in adjusting successive systems of worlds beyond the reach of the telescope; he may be very properly recalled from his excursions by this precept, and reminded, that there is a nearer being with which it is his duty to be more acquainted; and from which his attention has hitherto been withheld by studies, to which he has no other motive than vanity or curiosity.

The great praise of Socrates is, that he drew the wits of Greece, by his instruction and example, from the vain pursuits of natural philosophy to moral inquiries, and turned their thoughts from stars and tides, and matter and motion, upon the various modes of virtue and relation of life. All his lectures were but commentaries upon this saying; if we suppose the knowledge of ourselves recommended by Chilo, in opposition to other inquiries less suitable to the state of man.

The great fault of men of learning is still, that they offend against this rule, and appear willing to study any thing rather than themselves; for which reason they are often despised by those with whom they imagine themselves above comparison; despised, as useless to common purposes, as unable to conduct the most trivial affairs, and unqualified to perform these offices by which the concatenation of society is preserved, and mutual tender[illegible] cited and maintained.

Gelidus is a man of great penetratio[illegible] researches. Having a mind naturally [illegible] the abstruser sciences, he can compre[illegible] combinations without confusion; [illegible] temper naturally cool and equal, he[illegible]

rupted by his passions in the pursuit of the longest chain of unexpected consequences. He has, therefore, a long time indulged hopes, that the solution of some problems, by which the professors of science have been hitherto baffled, is reserved for his genius and industry. He spends his time in the highest room of his house, into which none of his family are suffered to enter; and when he comes down to his dinner, or his rest, he walks about like a stranger that is there only for a day, without any tokens of regard or tenderness. He has totally divested himself of all human sensations; he has neither eye for beauty, nor ear for complaint; he neither rejoices at the good fortune of his near friend, nor mourns for any public or private calamity. Having once received a letter, and given it his servant to read, he was informed that it was written by his brother, who, being shipwrecked, had swum naked to land, and was destitute of necessaries in a foreign country. Naked and destitute! says Gelidus; reach down the last volume of meteorological observations, extract an exact account of the wind, and note it carefully in the diary of the weather.

The family of Gelidus once broke into his study, to shew him that a town at a small distance was on fire, and in a few moments a servant came to tell him, that the flame had caught so many houses on both sides, that the inhabitants were confounded, and began to think of rather escaping with their lives, than saving their dwellings. What you tell me, says Gelidus, is very probable, for fire naturally acts in a circle.

Thus lives this great philosopher, insensible to every spectacle of distress, and unmoved by the loudest call of social nature, for want of considering that men are designed for the succour and comfort of each other; that though there are hours which may be laudably spent upon knowledge not immediately useful, yet the first attention is due to practical virtue; and that he may be justly driven out from the commerce of mankind, who has so far abstracted himself from the species, as to partake neither of the joys nor griefs of others, but neglects the endearments of his wife, and the caresses of his children, to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter.

I shall reserve to some future paper the religious and important meaning of this epitome of wisdom, and only remark, that it may be applied to the gay and light, as well as to the grave and solemn parts of life; and that not only the philosopher may forfeit his pretences to real learning, but the wit and the beauty may miscarry in their schemes, by the want of this universal requisite, the knowledge of themselves.

It is surely for no other reason, that we see such numbers resolutely struggling against nature, and contending for that which they never can attain, endeavouring to unite contradictions, and determinded to excel in characters inconsistent with each other; that stock-jobbers affect dress, gaiety, and elegance, and mathematicians labour to be wits; that the soldier teazes his acquaintances with questions in theology, and the academick hopes to divert the ladies by a recital of his gallantries.

That absurdity of pride could proceed only from ignorance of themselves, by which Garth attempted criticism, and Congreve waved his title to dramatick reputation, and desired to be considered only as a gentleman.

Euphues, with great parts, and extensive knowledge, has a clouded aspect and ungracious form; yet it has been his ambition, from his first entrance into life, to distinguish himself by particularities in his dress, to outvie beaux in embroidery, to import new trimmings, and to be foremost in the fashion. Euphues has turned on his exterior appearance, that attention, which would always have produced esteem had it been fixed upon his mind; and though his virtue and abilities have preserved him from the contempt which he has so diligently solicited, he has, at least, raised one impediment to his reputation; since all can judge of his dress, but few of his understanding; and many who discern that he is a fop, are unwilling to believe that he can be wise.

There is one instance in which the ladies are particularly unwilling to observe the rule of Chilo. They are desirous to hide from themselves the advances of age, and endeavour too frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity. They hope to inflame the heart by glances which have lost their fire, or melt it by languor which is no longer delicate; they play over the airs which pleased at a time when they were expected only to please, and forget that airs in time ought to give place to virtues. They continue to trifle, because they could once trifle agreeably, till those

who shared their early pleasures are withdrawn to more serious engagements; and are scarcely awakened from their dream of perpetual youth, but by the scorn of those whom they endeavour to rival.

N° 25. TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 1750.

Possunt quia posse videntur.

VIRGIL.

For they can conquer who believe they can.

DRYDEN.

THERE are some vices and errors which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as entitled to some degree of respect, or have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shewn to rashness and cowardice, two vices, of which though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any public or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always considered as a topick of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made, by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and, perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and as I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions or deep researches, I am inclined to believe that this distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope, than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is that he leaves them behind. We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of error, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think

those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties, and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which there is the greatest danger; and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among those opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degrees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency; of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, confounds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly shew, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit nor abilities can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore

detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more obstinate and fatal; for a man once persuaded, that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no hope of gaining the victory; and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature, a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and, by consequence, to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terror and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflection, from one to another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panick to their scholars and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is unsufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears by which the *infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frighted from digressing into new tracts of

learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution, framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of others; and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or in the language of chemistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by Heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know, but by experience, whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in the flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, knew their own force only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, and may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to shew the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to

depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate, consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and so have proceeded with no less ease than they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement, sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposed him. Thus his terrors are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructors the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain; the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted. The one confines his pupil to the shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrors are equally to be avoided. Every man who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind, at once

the difficulty of excellence, and the force of industry; and remember that fame is not conferred but as the recompense of labour; and that labour, vigorously continued, has not often failed of its reward.

N° 26. SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1750.

Ingentes dominos, et claræ nomina famæ,
Illustrique graves nobilite domos
Devita, et longe cautus fuge; contrahe vela.
Et te littoribus cymba propinqua vehat.

SENECA.

Each mighty lord, big with a pompous name.
And each high house of fortune and of fame,
With caution fly; contract thy ample sails,
And near the shore improve the gentle gales.

ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

It is usual for men, engaged in the same pursuits, to be inquisitive after the conduct and fortune of each other; and therefore, I suppose it will not be unpleasing to you, to read an account of the various changes which have happened in part of a life devoted to literature. My narrative will not exhibit any great variety of events, or extraordinary revolutions; but may, perhaps, be not less useful, because I shall relate nothing which is not likely to happen to a thousand others.

I was born heir to a very small fortune, and left

by my father, whom I cannot remember, to the care of an uncle. He having no children, always treated me as his son, and finding in me those qualities which old men easily discover in sprightly children, when they happen to love them, declared, that a genius like mine should never be lost for want of cultivation. He therefore placed me for the usual time, at a great school, and then sent me to the university, with a larger allowance than my own patrimony would have afforded, that I might not keep mean company, but learn to become my dignity when I should be made lord chancellor, which he often lamented, that the increase of his infirmities was very likely to preclude him from seeing.

This exuberance of money displayed itself in gaiety of appearance and wantonness of expence, and introduced me to the acquaintance of those whom the same superfluity of fortune betrayed to the same licence and ostentation; young heirs, who pleased themselves with a remark very frequent in their mouths, that though they were sent by their fathers to the university, they were not under the necessity of living by their learning.

Among men of this class I easily obtained the reputation of a great genius, and was persuaded, that, with such liveliness of imagination, and delicacy of sentiment, I should never be able to submit to the drudgery of the law. I therefore gave myself wholly to the more airy and elegant parts of learning, and was often so much elated with my superiority to the youths with whom I conversed, that I began to listen, with great atten-

tion, to those that recommended to me a wider and more conspicuous theatre; and was particularly touched with an observation, made by one of my friends, That it was not by lingering in the university that Prior became ambassador, or Addison secretary of state.

This desire was hourly increased by the solicitation of my companions, who, removing one by one to London, as the caprice of their relations allowed them, or the legal dimission from the hands of their guardians put it in their power, never failed to send an account of the beauty and felicity of the new world, and to remonstrate how much was lost by every hour's continuance in a place of retirement and constraint.

My uncle in the mean time frequently harassed me with monitory letters, which I sometimes neglected to open for a week after I received them, and generally read in a tavern, with such comments as might shew how much I was superior to instruction or advice. I could not but wonder, how a man confined to the country, and unacquainted with the present system of things, should imagine himself qualified to instruct a rising genius, born to give laws to the age, refine its taste, and multiply its pleasures.

The postman, however, still continued to bring me new remonstrances; for my uncle was very little depressed by the ridicule and reproach which he never heard. But men of parts have quick resentments; it was impossible to bear his usurpations for ever; and I resolved, once for all, to make him an example to those who imagine themselves wise because they are old, and to teach young

men, who are too tame under representation, in what manner grey-bearded insolence ought to be treated. I therefore one evening took my pen in hand, and after having animated myself with a catch, wrote a general answer to all his precepts, with such vivacity of turn, such elegance of irony, and such asperity of sarcasm, that I convulsed a large company with universal laughter, disturbed the neighbourhood with vociferations of applause, and five days afterwards was answered, that I must be content to live on my own estate.

This contraction of my income gave me no disturbance, for a genius like mine was out of the reach of want. I had friends that would be proud to open their purses at my call, and prospects of such advancement as would soon reconcile my uncle, whom, upon mature deliberation, I resolved to receive into favour, without insisting on any acknowledgment of his offence, when the splendour of my condition should induce him to wish for my countenance. I therefore went up to London, before I had shewn the alteration of my condition, by any abatement of my way of living, and was received by all my academical acquaintance with triumph and congratulation. I was immediatly introduced among the wits and men of spirit; and in a short time had divested myself of all my scholar's gravity, and obtained the reputation of a pretty fellow.

You will easily believe that I had no great knowledge of the world; yet I had been hindered, by the general disinclination every man feels to confess poverty, from telling to any one the resolution of my uncle, and for some time subsisted upon the

stock of money which I had brought with me, and contributed my share as before to all our entertainments. But my pocket was soon emptied, and I was obliged to ask my friends for a small sum. This was a favour which we had often reciprocally received from one another; they supposed my wants only accidental, and therefore willingly supplied them. In a short time I found a necessity of asking again, and was again treated with the same civility; but the third time they began to wonder what that old rogue my uncle could mean by sending a gentleman to town without money; and when they gave me what I asked for, advised me to stipulate for more regular remittances.

This somewhat disturbed my dream of constant affluence, but I was three days after completely awaked; for entering the tavern, where we met every evening, I found the waiters remitted their complaisance, and, instead of contending to light me up stairs, suffered me to wait for some minutes by the bar. When I came to my company, I found them unusually grave and formal, and one of them took a hint to turn the conversation upon the misconduct of young men, and enlarged upon the folly of frequenting the company of men of fortune, without being able to support the expence, an observation which the rest contributed either to enforce by repetition, or to illustrate by examples. Only one of them tried to divert the discourse, and endeavoured to direct my attention to remote questions and common topicks.

A man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected. I went, however, next morning to

breakfast with him who appeared ignorant of the drift of the conversation, and by a series of inquiries drawing still nearer to the point, prevailed on him, not perhaps, much against his will, to inform me, that Mr. *Dash*, whose father was a wealthy attorney near my native place, had, the morning before, received an account of my uncle's resentment, and communicated his intelligence with the utmost industry of grovelling insolence.

It was now no longer practicable to consort with my former friends, unless I would be content to be used as an inferior guest, who has to pay for his wine by mirth and flattery; a character which, if I could not escape it, I resolved to endure only among those who had never known me in the pride of plenty. I changed my lodgings, and frequented the coffee-houses in a different region of the town; where I was very quickly distinguished by several young gentlemen of high birth and large estates, and began again to amuse my imagination with hopes of preferment, though not quite so confidently as when I had less experience.

The first great conquest which this new scene enabled me to gain over myself was, when I submitted to confess to a party, who invited me to an expensive diversion, that my revenues were not equal to such golden pleasures; they would not suffer me, however, to stay behind, and with great reluctance I yielded to be treated. I took that opportunity of recommending myself to some office or employment, which they unanimously promised to procure me by their joint interest.

I had now entered into a state of dependence, and had hopes or fears from almost every man I saw. If it be unhappy to have one patron, what is his misery who has many? I was obliged to comply with a thousand caprices, to concur in a thousand follies, and to countenance a thousand errors. I endured innumerable mortifications, if not from cruelty, at least from negligence, which will creep in upon the kindest and most delicate minds, when they converse without the mutual awe of equal condition. I found the spirit and vigour of liberty every moment sinking in me, and a servile fear of displeasing, stealing by degrees upon all my behaviour, till no word, or look, or action, was my own. As the solicitude to please increased, the power of pleasing grew less, and I was always clouded with diffidence where it was most my interest and wish to shine.

My patrons, considering me as belonging to the community, and therefore not the charge of any particular person, made no scruple of neglecting any opportunity of promoting me, which every one thought more properly the business of another. An account of my expectations and disappointments, and the succeeding vicissitudes of my life, I shall give you in my following letter, which will be, I hope, of use to shew how ill he forms his schemes, who expects happiness without freedom.

N° 27. TUESDAY, JUNE 19. 1750.

Pauperiem metuens potiore metallis
Libertate caret——

HOR.

So he, who poverty with horror views,
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold)
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight.

FRANCIS.

MR. RAMBLER,

As it is natural for every man to think himself of importance, your knowledge of the world will incline you to forgive me, if I imagine your curiosity so much excited by the former part of my narration, as to make you desire that I should proceed without any unnecessary arts of connection. I shall, therefore, not keep you longer in such suspence, as perhaps my performance may not compensate.

In the gay company with which I was now united, I found those allurements and delights, which the friendship of young men always affords; there was that openness which naturally produced confidence, that affability which, in some measure, softened dependence, and that ardour of profession which incited hope. When our hearts were dilated with merriment, promises were poured out with unlimited profusion, and life and fortune were but a scanty sacrifice to friendship; but when

the hour came at which any effort was to be made, I had generally the vexation to find that my interest weighed nothing against the slightest amusement, and that every petty avocation was found a sufficient plea for continuing me in uncertainty and want. Their kindness was indeed sincere; when they promised, they had no intention to deceive; but the same juvenile warmth which kindled their benevolence, gave force in the same proportion to every other passion, and I was forgotten as soon as any new pleasure seized on their attention.

Vagario told me one evening, that all my perplexities should be soon at an end, and desired me, from that instant, to throw upon him all care of my fortune; for a post of considerable value was that day become vacant, and he knew his interest sufficient to procure it in the morning. He desired me to call on him early, that he might be dressed soon enough to wait on the minister before any other application should be made. I came as he appointed, with all the flame of gratitude, and was told by his servant, that having found at his lodgings, when he came home, an acquaintance who was going to travel, he had been persuaded to accompany him to Dover, and that they had taken post horses two hours before day.

I was once very near to preferment, by the kindness of Charinus, who, at my request, went to beg a place, which he thought me likely to fill with great reputation, and in which I should have many opportunities of promoting his interest in return; and he pleased himself with imagining the mutual benefits that we should confer, and the ad-

vances that we should make by our united strength. Away therefore he went, equally warm with friendship and ambition, and left me to prepare acknowledgments against his return. At length he came back, and told me that he had met in his way a party going to breakfast in the country, that the ladies importuned him too much to be refused, and that having passed the morning with them, he was come back to dress himself for a ball, to which he was invited for the evening.

I have suffered several disappointments from tailors and periwig-makers, who by neglecting to perform their work, withheld my patrons from court; and once failed of an establishment for life by the delay of a servant, sent to a neighbouring shop, to replenish a snuff-box.

At last I thought my solicitude at an end, for an office fell into the gift of Hippodamus's father, who being then in the country, could not very speedily fill it, and whose fondness would not have suffered him to refuse his son a less reasonable request. Hippodamus therefore set forward with great expedition, and I expected every hour an account of his success. A long time I waited without any intelligence, but at last received a letter from New-market, by which I was informed, that the races were begun, and I knew the vehemence of his passions too well to imagine that he could refuse himself his favourite amusement.

You will not wonder that I was at last weary of the patronage of young men, especially as I found them not generally to promise much greater fidelity as they advance in life; for I observed that what they gained in steadiness they lost in bene-

volence, and grew colder to my interest as they became more diligent to promote their own. I was convinced that their liberality was only profuseness, that, as chance directed, they were equally generous to vice and virtue, that they were warm but because they were thoughtless, and counted the support of a friend only amongst other gratifications of passion.

My resolution was now to ingratiate myself with men whose reputation was established, whose high stations enabled them to prefer me, and whose age exempted them from sudden changes of inclination. I was considered as a man of parts, and therefore easily found admission to the table of Hilarius the celebrated orator, renowned equally for the extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his diction, and the acuteness of his wit. Hilarius received me with an appearance of great satisfaction, produced to me all his friends, and directed to me that part of his discourse in which he most endeavoured to display his imagination. I had now learned my own interest enough to supply him opportunities for smart remarks and gay sallies, which I never failed to echo and applaud. Thus I was gaining every hour on his affections, till unfortunately, when the assembly was more splendid than usual, his desire of admiration prompted him to turn his raillery upon me. I bore it for some time with great submission, and success encouraged him to redouble his attacks; at last my vanity prevailed over my prudence. I retorted his irony with such spirit, that Hilarius, unaccustomed to resistance, was disconcerted, and soon found means of convincing me that his purpose

was not to encourage a rival, but to foster a parasite.

I was then taken into the familiarity of Argutio, a nobleman eminent for judgment and criticism. He had contributed to my reputation by the praises which he had often bestowed upon my writings, in which he owned that there were proofs of a genius that might rise to high degrees of excellence, when time, or information, had reduced its exuberance. He therefore required me to consult him before the publication of any new performance, and commonly proposed innumerable alterations, without sufficient attention to the general design, or regard to my form of style and mode of imagination. But these corrections he never failed to press as indispensably necessary, and thought the least delay of compliance an act of rebellion. The pride of an author made this treatment insufferable, and I thought any tyranny easier to be borne than that which took from me the use of my understanding.

My next patron was Eutyches, the statesman, who was wholly engaged in publick affairs, and seemed to have no ambiton but to be powerful and rich. I found his favour more permanent than that of the others, for there was a certain price at which it might be bought; he allowed nothing to humour, or to affection, but was always ready to pay liberally for the service that he required. His demands were, indeed, very often such as virtue could not easily consent to gratify; but virtue is not to be consulted when men are to raise their fortunes by the favour of the great. His measures were censured; I wrote in his de-

fence, and was recompensed with a place, of which the profits were never received by me without the pangs of remembering that they were the reward of wickedness, a reward which nothing but that necessity which the consumption of my little estate in these wild pursuits had brought upon me, hindered me from throwing back in the face of my corrupter.

At this time my uncle died without a will, and I became heir to a small fortune. I had resolution to throw of the splendour which reproached me to myself, and retire to a humbler state, in which I am now endeavouring to recover the dignity of virtue, and hope to make some reparation for my crime and follies, by informing others, who may be led after the same pageants, that they are about to engage in a course of life, in which they are to purchase by a thousand miseries, the privilege of repentance.

I am, &c.

EUBULUS.

N° 28. SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1750.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi.

SENECA.

To him, alas! to him I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flatt'ring his senseless pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go.

COWLEY.

I HAVE shewn, in a late essay, to what errors men are hourly betrayed by a mistaken opinion of their own powers, and a negligent inspection of their own character. But as I then confined my observations to common occurrences and familiar scenes, I think it proper to inquire, how far a nearer acquaintance with ourselves is necessary to our preservation from crimes as well as follies, and how much the attentive study of our own minds may contribute to secure to us the approbation of that Being, to whom we are accountable for our thoughts and our actions, and whose favour must finally constitute our total happiness.

If it be reasonable to estimate the difficulty of any enterprise by frequent miscarriages, it may justly be concluded that it is not easy for a man to know himself; for wheresoever we turn our view, we shall find almost all with whom we con-

verse so nearly as to judge of their sentiments, indulging more favourable conceptions of their own virtue than they have been able to impress upon others, and congratulating themselves upon degrees of excellence, which their fondest admirers cannot allow them to have attained.

Those representations of imaginary virtue are generally considered as arts of hypocrisy, and as snares laid for confidence and praise. But I believe the suspicion often unjust; those who thus propagate their own reputation, only extend the fraud by which they have been themselves deceived; for this failing is incident to numbers who seem to live without designs, competitions, or pursuits; it appears on occasions which promise no accession of honour or of profit, and to persons from whom very little is to be hoped or feared. It is, indeed, not easy to tell how far we may be blinded by the love of ourselves, when we reflect how much a secondary passion can cloud our judgment, and how few faults a man, in the first raptures of love, can discover in the person or conduct of his mistress.

To lay open all the sources from which error flows in upon him who contemplates his own character, would require more exact knowledge of the human heart, than, perhaps, the most acute and laborious observers have acquired. And since falsehood may be diversified without end, it is no unlikely that every man admits an imposture in some respect peculiar to himself, as his views have been accidentally directed, or his ideas particularly combined.

Some fallacies, however, there are, more frequently insidious, which it may, perhaps, not be useless to detect, because though they are gross, they may be fatal, and because nothing but attention is necessary to defeat them.

One sophism by which men persuade themselves that they have those virtues which they really want, is formed by the substitution of single acts for habits. A miser, who once relieved a friend from the danger of a prison, suffers his imagination to dwell for ever upon his own heroick generosity; he yields his heart up to indignation at those who are blind to merit or insensible to misery, and who can please themselves with the enjoyment of that wealth which they never permit others to partake. From any censures of the world, or reproaches of his conscience, he has an appeal to action and to knowledge; and though his whole life is a course of rapacity and avarice, he concludes himself to be tender and liberal, because he has once performed an act of liberality and tenderness.

As a glass which magnifies objects by the approach of one end to the eye, lessens them by the application of the other; so vices are extenuated by the inversion of that fallacy by which virtues are augmented. Those faults which we cannot conceal from our own notice, are considered, however frequent, not as habitual corruptions or settled practices, but as casual failures, and single lapses. A man who has, from year to year, set his country to sale, either for the gratification of his ambition or resentment, confesses that the heat of party now and then betrays the severest virtue to measures that cannot be seriously defended. He

that spends his days and nights in riot and debauchery, owns that his passions oftentimes overpower his resolution. But each comforts himself that his faults are not without precedent, for the best and the wisest men have given way to the violence of sudden temptations.

There are men who always confound the praise of goodness with the practice, and who believe themselves mild and moderate, charitable and faithful, because they have exerted their eloquence in commendation of mildness, fidelity, and other virtues. This is an error almost universal among those that converse much with dependents, with such whose fear or interest disposes them to a seeming reverence for any declamation, however enthusiastick, and submission to any boast, however arrogant. Having none to recal their attention to their lives, they rate themselves by the goodness of their opinions, and forget how much more easily men may shew their virtue in their talk than in their actions.

The tribe is likewise very numerous of those who regulate their lives, not by the standard of religion, but the measure of other men's virtue; who lull their own remorse with the remembrance of crimes more atrocious than their own, and seem to believe that they are not bad while another can be found worse.

For escaping these and a thousand other deceits, many expedients have been proposed. Some have recommended the frequent consultation of a wise friend, admitted to intimacy, and encouraged to sincerity. But this appears a remedy by no means adapted to general use: for in order to secure the

virtue of one, it presupposses more virtue in two than will generally be found—In the first, such a desire of rectitude and amendment, as may incline him to hear his own accusation from the mouth of him whom he esteems, and by whom, therefore, he will always hope that his faults are not discovered; and in the second, such zeal and honesty, as will make him content for his friend's advantage to lose his kindness.

A long life may be passed without finding a friend in whose understanding and virtue he can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and sincerity. A weak man, however honest, is not qualified to judge. A man of the world, however penetrating, is not fit to counsel. Friends are often chosen for similitude of manners, and therefore each palliates the other's failings, because they are his own. Friends are tender, and unwilling to give pain, or they are interested, and fearful to offend.

These objections have inclined others to advise, that he who would know himself, should consult his enemies, remember the reproaches that are vented to his face, and listen for the censures that are uttered in private. For his great business is to know his faults, and those malignity will discover, and resentment will reveal. But this precept may be often frustrated; for it seldom happens that rivals or opponents are suffered to come near enough to know our conduct with so much exactness as that conscience should allow and reflect the accusation. The charge of an enemy is often totally false, and commonly so mingled with falsehood, that the mind takes advantage from the failure of

N° 29. TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1750.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte premit deus,
Ridetque si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidet——

HOR.

But God has wisely hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.

ELPHINSTON.

THERE is nothing recommended with greater frequency among the gayer poets of antiquity, than the secure possession of the present hour, and the dismission of all the cares which intrude upon our quiet, or hinder, by importunate perturbations, the enjoyment of those delights which our condition happens to set before us.

The ancient poets are, indeed, by no means unexceptionable teachers of morality; their precepts are to be always considered as the sallies of a genius, intent rather upon giving pleasure than instruction, eager to take every advantage of insinuation, and provided the passions can be engaged on its side, very little solicitous about the suffrage of reason.

The darkness and uncertainty through which the heathens were compelled to wander in the

pursuit of happiness, may, indeed, be alleged as an excuse for many of their seducing invitations to immediate enjoyment, which the moderns, by whom they have been imitated, have not to plead. It is no wonder that such as had no promise of another state should eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imagination, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals, and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servility of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errors and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment that on these occasions they often warn their readers against inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet unactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resignation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endea-

vour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, in whose power providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shews an equal ignorance of our proper sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that on which our thoughts can have no influence?

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprised; and perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity, as give previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected, upon others that have less foresight. But the truth is that things to come, except when they approach very nearly, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he was deceived by their phantoms, nor never realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprized because he is not disappointed, and he escapes disappointment because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is so justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which must always be suggested by the view of the world; but such a de-

sponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life; a temper which keeps the man always in alarms, disposes him to judge of every thing in a manner that least favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been usual in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear as well as to hope, and may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraints to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good; and for the reason that we ought not to hope too securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sud-

den accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborne, may become another proof of the false flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terror, by considering that our persecutors are weak, and ignorant, and mortal, like ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of unhappy incidents should never be suffered to disturb us before they happen; because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet must be lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether this sentiment be entirely just, I shall not examine; but certainly if it be improper to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.

As we ought not to give way to fear any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects both

of fear and hope are yet uncertain, so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of the other, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity. It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination; every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and question the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you; when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety, is painful without use. Every consideration, therefore, by which groundless terrors may be removed, adds something to human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future, they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the duties, to make provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose; for he,

doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety, when he impairs his virtue.

N° 30. SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1750.

——Vultus ubi tuus
Affulfit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent.

HOR.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial suns more radiant shine,
The day more glad appears.

ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

THERE are few tasks more ungrateful, than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises. In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will, on such occasions, assert its merit and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, Sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a publick benefit. This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew—a very respectable person, but somewhat austere in his manner; highly and deservedly valued by his near relations

and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a large society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I in the bloom of youth came into it, succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good-humour, and benevolence always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past; so long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm, one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they chuse to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape: and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts of places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice, as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and though rest and composure are my peculiar joy, am worn out, and harassed to death with journeys by men and women of quality, who never take one, but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme, will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill bred as to take physick on purpose when they have reason to ex-

pect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me, are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour, that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally whenever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, and love; to one capable of answering and rewarding the greatest warmth and delicacy of sentiments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent people, who affectionately loved me, and treated me with the utmost honour and respect. It would be tedious to relate the variety of my adventures, and strange vicissitudes of my fortune in many different countries. Here in *England* there was a time when I lived according to my heart's desire. Wherever I appeared, publick assemblies appointed for my reception were crowded with persons of quality and fashion, early dressed as for a court, to pay me their devoirs. Cheerful hospitality every where crowned my board, and I was looked upon in every country parish as a kind of social bond between the 'squire, the parson, and the tenants. The laborious poor every where blest my appearance: they do so still, and keep their best clothes to do me honour; though as much as I delight in the honest country folks, they do now and then throw a pot of ale at my head, and sometimes an

unlucky boy will drive his cricket-ball full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were persons who thought me too demure and grave. I must forsooth by all means be instructed by foreign masters, and taught to dance and play. This method of education was so contrary to my genius, formed for much nobler entertainment, that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very different set. They were so excessively scandalized at the gaiety of my appearance, as not only to despoil me of the foreign fopperies, the paint and the patches that I had been tricked out with by my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed me of every innocent ornament I had from my infancy been used to gather in the fields and gardens; nay, they blacked my face, and covered me all over with a habit of mourning, and that too very coarse and awkward. I was now obliged to spend my whole life in hearing sermons; nor permitted so much as to smile upon any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a perfect bugbear to all children and young folks. Whereever I came there was a general hush, and an immediate stop to all pleasantness of look or discourse; and not being permitted to talk with them in my own language at that time, they took such a disgust to me in those tedious hours of yawning, that having transmitted it to their children, I cannot now be heard, tho' it is long since I have recovered my natural form, and pleasing tone of voice. Would they but receive my visits kindly, and listen to what I could tell them—let me say it without

vanity—how charming a companion should I be! to every one could I talk on the subject most interesting and most pleasing. With the great and ambitious, I would discourse of honours and advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the sure method to attain them. I would teach them to put out their money on the best interest, and instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure and improve it to the highest degree. The beauty should learn of me how to preserve an everlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and relaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the truth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt but many will be desirous of improving their acquaintance with me; and that I may not be thought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, how I wish to be received.

You must know I equally hate lazy idleness and hurry. I would every where be welcomed at a tolerably early hour with decent good-humour and gratitude. I must be attended in the great halls peculiarly appropriated to me with respect; but I do not insist upon finery: propriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is all I require. I must at dinner be treated with a temperate, but cheerful social meal; both the neighbours and the poor should be the better for me. Some time I must have a tete-a-tete with my kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit should be spent in pleasant walks and airings among sets of agreeable people.

in such discourse as I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some few selected out of those numberless books that are dedicated to me, and go by my name;— a name that, alas! as the world stands at present, makes them oftener thrown aside than taken up. As those conversations and books should be both well chosen, to give some advice on that head may possibly furnish you with a future paper, and any thing you shall offer on my behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. RAMBLER,

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

SUNDAY.

N° 31. TUESDAY, JULY 3. 1750.

Non ego mendosos ausim defendere mores,
Falsaque pro vitiis arma tenere meis.

OVID.

Corrupted manners I shall ne'er defend,
Nor, falsely witty, for my faults contend.

ELPHIN.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the narrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discover that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves, and that with whatever ease they give up the claim

of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from faults in their own conduct, and from error in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate opposition, which we may observe made to confutation, however clear, and to reproof however tender, is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose that those who break out into fury at the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered as either shameful or wonderful, and they would not receive with so much emotion intelligence which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, *I knew that my son was mortal*: He that is convinced of an error, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of straining for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true that most of our passions are excited by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting that to be considered as subject to fallacies of ratiocination, or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding rage and vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things in which neither of the disputants have any other interest than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted; and the observation of every day will give new proofs with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments, how often the state of the question is altered, how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented, and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

Of all mortals none seem to have been more infected with this species of vanity than the race of writers, whose reputation arising solely from their understanding, gives them a very delicate sensibility of any violence attempted on their literary honour. It is not unpleasing to remark with what solicitude men of acknowledged abilities will endeavour to palliate absurdities and reconcile contradictions, only to obviate criticisms to which all

human performances must ever be exposed, and from which they can never suffer, but when they teach the world by a vain and ridiculous impatience to think them of importance.

Dryden, whose warmth of fancy, and haste of composition, very frequently hurried him into inaccuracies, heard himself sometimes exposed to ridicule for having said in one of his tragedies,

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.

That no man could at once follow and be followed was, it may be thought, too plain to be long disputed; and the truth is, that Dryden was apparently betrayed into the blunder by the double meaning of the word Fate, to which in the former part of the verse he had annexed the idea of Fortune, and in the latter that of Death; so that the sense only was, *though pursued by* Death *I will not resign myself to despair, but will follow* Fortune, *and do and suffer what is appointed.* This, however, was not completely expressed, and Dryden, being determined not to give way to his criticks, never confessed that he had been surprised by an ambiguity; but finding luckily in *Virgil* an account of a man moving in a circle, with this expression, *Et se sequiturque fugitque*, "Here," says he, "is "the passage in imitation of which I wrote the "line that my criticks were pleased to condemn "as nonsense; not but I may sometimes write "nonsense, though they have not the fortune to "find it."

Every one sees the folly of such mean doublings to escape the pursuit of criticism; nor is there a

single reader of this poet, who would not have paid him greater veneration, had he shewn consciousness enough of his own superiority to set such cavils at defiance, and owned that he sometimes slipped into errors by the tumult of his imagination, and the multitude of his ideas.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude see a man persist in a project which he has found to be impracticable, live in an inconvenient house because it was contrived by himself, or wear a coat of a particular cut, in hopes by perseverance to bring it into fashion. These are indeed follies, but they are only follies, and, however wild or ridiculous, can very little affect others.

But such pride, once indulged, too frequently operates upon more important objects, and inclines men not only to vindicate their errors, but their vices; to persist in practices which their own hearts condemn, only lest they should seem to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the advice of others; or to search for sophisms tending to the confusion of all principles, and the evacuation of all duties, that they may not appear to act what they are not able to defend.

Let every man who finds vanity so far predominant as to betray him to this last degree of corruption, pause a moment to consider what will be the consequences of the plea which he is about to offer for a practice to which he knows himself not led at first by reason, but impelled by the violence of desire, surprised by the suddenness of

passion, or seduced by the soft approaches of temptation, and by imperceptible gradations of guilt. Let him consider what he is going to commit by forcing his understanding to patronise those appetites, which it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to defend it, and good and evil, when they have been once shewn, are so easily distinguished, that such apologists seldom gain proselytes to their party; nor have their fallacies power to deceive any but those whose desires have clouded their discernment. All that the best faculties thus employed can perform is, to persuade the hearers that the man is hopeless whom they only thought vicious, that corruption has passed from his manners to his principles, that all endeavours for his recovery are without prospect of success, and that nothing remains but to avoid him as infectious, or hunt him down as destructive.

But if it be supposed that he may impose on his audience by partial representations of consequences, intricate deductions of remote causes, or perplexed combinations of ideas, which, having various relations, appear different as viewed on different sides; that he may sometimes puzzle the weak and well-meaning, and now and then seduce, by the admiration of his abilities, a young mind still fluctuating in unsettled notions, and neither fortified by instruction nor enlightened by experience; yet what must be the event of such a triumph? A man cannot spend all his life in frolick: age, or disease, or solitude, will bring some hours of serious consideration, and it will then

afford no comfort to think, that he has extended the dominion of vice, that he has loaded himself with the crimes of others, and can never know the extent of his own wickedness, or make reparation for the mischief that he has caused. There is not perhaps in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles; of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return; of having blinded them to every beauty but the paint of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the syrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice: men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves; by often contending they grow sincere in the cause, and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them. They are then at the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having that light rekindled in their minds which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them: for not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the tears of saints, and the dying terrors of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well known that Cæsar wrote

an account of the errors committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is perhaps in rational estimation greater than Cæsar's, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. "So much," says Celsus, "does the "open and artless confession of an error become "a man conscious that he has enough remaining "to support his character.

As all error is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errors should know his retraction, and that those who have learned vice by his example should by his example be taught amendment.

N° 32. SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1750.

Οσσα τε δαιμονιησι τυχαις βροτοι αλγε εχουσιν,
Ων αν μοιραν εχης, πραως φερε, μηδ' αγανακτει·
Ιασθαι δε πρεπει καθοσον δυνη.

PYTHAG.

Of all the woes that load the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou can'st.

ELPHINSTON.

So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topicks of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection were the Stoicks, or scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastick virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbade them to be counted any longer among the

objects of terror or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

This edict was, I think, not universally observed; for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses; for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne; and therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched,

which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being; all attempts therefore to decline it wholly are useless and vain; the armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side; the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points, but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which Heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

Let pain deserv'd without complaint be borne.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether more necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered, that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped; and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward, which he by whom it is inflicted will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgments which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may lawfully struggle; for

the calamities of life, like the necessities of nature, are calls to labour and exercises of diligence. When we feel any pressure of distress, we are not to conclude that we can only obey the will of Heaven by languishing under it, any more than when we perceive the pain of thirst, we are to imagine that water is prohibited. Of misfortune it never can be certainly known whether, as proceeding from the hand of God, it is an act of favour or of punishment; but since all the ordinary dispensations of providence are to be interpreted according to the general analogy of things, we may conclude that we have a right to remove one inconvenience as well as another; that we are only to take care lest we purchase ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpose, whether of reward or severity, will be answered by the labours which he lays us under the necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any state than in diseases intensely painful, which may indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to strain the powers of life to their utmost stretch, and leave very little of the attention vacant to precept or reproof. In this state the nature of man requires some indulgence, and every extravagance but impiety may be easily forgiven him. Yet, lest we should think ourselves too soon entitled to the mournful privileges of irresistible misery, it is proper to reflect, that the utmost anguish which human wit can contrive, or human malice can inflict, has been borne with constancy; and that, if the pains of disease be, as I believe they are, sometimes greater than those of artificial torture, they are therefore in their own nature shorter, the

vital frame is quickly broken, or the union between soul and body is for a time suspended by insensibility, and we soon cease to feel our maladies when they once become too violent to be borne. I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all that can be inflicted on the other, whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be separated sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on our passions, such as diminution of fortune, loss of friends, or declension of character, the chief danger of impatience is upon the first attack, and many expedients have been contrived, by which the blow may be broken. Of these the most general precept is, not to take pleasure in any thing, of which it is not in our power to secure the possession to ourselves. This counsel, when we consider the enjoyment of any terristrial advantage, as opposite to a constant and habitual solicitude for future felicity, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by that authority which cannot be disputed; but in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see lest our eyes should light upon deformity! It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of

impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the GOD of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the* LORD, *whether he gives or takes away.*

N° 33. TUESDAY, JULY 10, 1750.

Quod caret alterna requie durabile non est.

OVID.

Alternate rest and labour long endure.

IN the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure and constant plenty, under the protection of REST; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits which, without culture, fell ripe into their

hands, and slept under bowers arched by nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each, though there was more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered violence and fraud, and theft and rapine. Soon after pride and envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons; part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief; FAMINE, with a thousand diseases, which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havock among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of FAMINE, who scattered the ground every where with carcases, LABOUR came down upon earth. LABOUR was the son of NECESSITY, the nursling of HOPE,

and the pupil of ART; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun; he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals! see here the power to whom you are "consigned, and from whom you are to hope for "all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have "long languished under the dominion of REST, "an impotent and deceitful goddess, who can "neither protect nor relieve you, but resigns you "to the first attacks of either FAMINE or DISEASE, "and suffers her shades to be invaded by every "enemy, and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of LABOUR. I "will teach you to remedy the sterility of the "earth, and the severity of the sky: I will compel summer to find provisions for the winter; I "will force the waters to give you their fish, the "air its fowls, and the forest its beasts: I will "teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and "bring out from the caverns of the mountains "metals which shall give strength to your hands, "and security to your bodies, by which you may "be covered from the assaults of the fiercest beasts, "and with which you shall fell the oak, and "divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use "and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered LABOUR as their only friend, and hasted to his command. He

led them out to the fields and mountains, and shewed them how to open mines, to level hills, to drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn and plantations of fruit-trees; and nothing was seen but heaps of grain and baskets of fruit, full tables and crowded storehouses.

Thus LABOUR and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and saw FAMINE gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of LASSITUDE, who was known by her sunk eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning: at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitations of LABOUR, and began to wish again for the golden hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of REST, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended no dedicate the remaining part of their lives. REST had not left the world; they quickly found her, and to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which LABOUR had procured them.

REST therefore took leave of the groves and valleys which she had hitherto inhabited, and entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and

slumbered away the winter upon beds of down and the summer in artificial grottoes with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity, which they knew before their engagements with LABOUR: Nor was her dominion entirely without controul, for she was obliged to share it with LUXURY, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last LUXURY betrayed her charge, and let in DISEASE to seize upon her worshippers. REST then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers; who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

REST had not always the same enemy: in some places she escaped the incursions of DISEASE; but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, SATIETY would enter with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of REST. No sooner was she seated than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediatly lost their verdure, and their inhabitants desisted from their melody, the breeze

sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wandering about they knew not whither, in quest they knew not of what; no voice was heard but of complaints that mentioned no pain, and murmurs that could tell of no misfortune.

REST had now lost her authority. Her followers again began to treat her with contempt; some of them united themselves more closely to LUXURY, who promised by her arts to drive SATIETY away; and others that were more wise, or had more fortitude, went back again to LABOUR, by whom they were indeed protected from SATIETY, but delivered up in time to LASSITUDE, and forced by her to the bowers of REST.

Thus REST and LABOUR equally perceived their reign of short duration and uncertain tenure, and their empire liable to inroads from those who were alike enemies to both. They each found their subjects unfaithful, and ready to desert them upon every opportunity. LABOUR saw the riches which he had given always carried away as an offering to REST, and REST found her votaries in every exigence flying from her to beg help of LABOUR. They, therefore, at last determined upon an interview, in which they agreed to divide the world between them, and govern it alternately, allotting the dominion of the day to one, and that of the night to the other, and promised to guard the frontiers of each other, so that, whenever hostilities were attempted, SATIETY should be intercepted by LABOUR, and LASSITUDE expelled by REST. Thus the ancient quarrel was

appeased, and as hatred is often succeeded by its contrary, REST afterwards became pregnant by LABOUR, and was delivered of HEALTH, a benevolent goddess, who consolidated the union of her parents, and contributed to the regular vicissitudes of their reign, by dispensing her gifts to those only who shared their lives in just proportions between REST and LABOUR.

N° 34. SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1750.

——Non sine vano
Aurarum et siluæ metu.——

HOR.

Alarm'd with ev'ry rising gale,
In ev'ry wood, in ev'ry vale.

ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been censured for having hitherto dedicated so few of my speculations to the ladies; and indeed the moralist whose instructions are accommodated only to one half of the human species, must be confessed not sufficiently to have extended his views. Yet it is to be considered, that masculine duties afford more room for counsels and observations, as they are less uniform, and connected with things more subject to vicissitude and accident; we therefore find, that in philosophical discourses which teach by precept, or historical narratives that instruct by example, the peculiar virtues or faults of women fill but a small part;

perhaps generally too small, for so much of our domestick happiness is in their hands, and their influence is so great upon our earliest years, that the universal interest of the world requires them to be well instructed in their province; nor can it be thought proper that the qualities by which so much pain or pleasure may be given should be left to the direction of chance.

I have, therefore, willingly given a place in my paper to a letter, which perhaps may not be wholly useless to them whose chief ambition is to please, as it shews how certainly the end is missed by absurd and injudicious endeavours at distinction.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I am a young gentleman at my own disposal, with a considerable estate; and having passed through the common forms of education, spent some time in foreign countries, and made myself distinguished since my return in the politest company, I am now arrived at that part of life in which every man is expected to settle, and provide for the continuation of his lineage. I withstood for some time the solicitations and remonstrances of my aunts and uncles, but at last was persuaded to visit *Anthea*, an heiress, whose land lies contiguous to mine, and whose birth and beauty are without objection. Our friends declared that we were born for each other, all those on both sides who had no interest in hindering our union, contributed to promote it, and were conspiring to hurry us into matrimony, before we had an opportunity of knowing one another. I was, however, too old

to be given away without my own consent, and having happened to pick up an opinion, which to many of my relations seemed extremely odd, that a man might be unhappy with a large estate, determined to obtain a nearer knowledge of the person with whom I was to pass the remainder of my time. To protract the courtship was by no means difficult, for *Anthea* had a wonderful facility of evading questions which I seldom repeated, and of barring approaches which I had no great eagerness to press.

Thus the time passed away in visits and civilities, without any ardent professions of love, or formal offers of settlements. I often attended her to publick places, in which, as is well known, all behaviour is so much regulated by custom, that very little insight can be gained into the private character, and therefore I was not yet able to inform myself of her humour and inclinations.

At last I ventured to propose to her to make one of a small party, and spend a day in viewing a seat and gardens a few miles distant; and having, upon her compliance, collected the rest of the company, I brought, at the hour, a coach which I had borrowed from an acquaintance, having delayed to buy one myself, till I should have an opportunity of taking the lady's opinion for whose use it was intended. *Anthea* came down, but as she was going to step into the coach, started back with great appearance of terror, and told us that she durst not enter, for the shocking colour of the lining had so much the air of the mourning-coach, in which she followed her aunt's funeral three

years before, that she should never have her poor dear aunt out of her head.

I knew that it was not for lovers to argue with their mistresses; I therefore sent back the coach, and got another more gay. Into this we all entered, the coachman began to drive, and we were amusing ourselves with the expectation of what we should see, when, upon a small inclination of the carriage, *Anthea* screamed out, that we were overthrown. We were obliged to fix all our attention upon her, which she took care to keep up by renewing her outcries, at every corner where we had occasion to turn: at intervals, she entertained us with fretful complaints of the uneasiness of the coach, and obliged me to call several times on the coachman to take care and drive without jolting. The poor fellow endeavoured to please us, and therefore moved very slowly, till *Anthea* found out that this pace would only keep us longer on the stones, and desired that I would order him to make more speed. He whipped his horses, the coach jolted again, and *Anthea* very complaisantly told us how much she repented that she made one of our company.

At last we got into the smooth road, and began to think our difficulties at an end, when, on a sudden, *Anthea* saw a brook before us, which she could not venture to pass. We were therefore obliged to alight, that we might walk over the bridge; but when we came to it, we found it so narrow, that *Anthea* durst not set her foot upon it, and was content, after long consultation, to call the coach back, and with innumerable precautions, terrors, and lamentations, crossed the b[illegible]

It was necessary after this delay to amend our pace, and directions were accordingly given to the coachman, when *Anthea* informed us that it was common for the axle to catch fire with a quick motion, and begged of me to look out every minute, lest we should all be consumed. I was forced to obey, and gave her from time to time the most solemn declarations that all was safe, and that I hoped we should reach the place without losing our lives either by fire or water.

Thus we passed on, over ways soft and hard, with more or with less speed, but always with new vicissitudes of anxiety. If the ground was hard, we were jolted, if soft, we were sinking; if we went fast, we should be overturned, if slowly, we should never reach the place. At length she saw something which she called a cloud, and began to consider that at that time of the year it frequently thundered. This seemed to be the capital terror, for after that the coach was suffered to move on; and no danger was thought too dreadful to be encountered, provided she could get into a house before the thunder.

Thus our whole conversation passed in dangers, and cares, and fears, and consolations, and stories of ladies dragged in the mire, forced to spend all the night on a heath, drowned in rivers, or burnt with lightning; and no sooner had a hairbreadth escape set us free from one calamity, but we were threatened with another.

At length we reached the house where we intended to regale ourselves, and I proposed to *Anthea* the choice of a great number of dishes, which the place, being well provided for entertainment,

happened to afford. She made some objection to every thing that was offered; one thing she hated at that time of the year, another she could not bear since she had seen it spoiled at Lady *Feedwell's* table; another she was sure they could not dress at this house, and another she could not touch without French sauce. At last she fixed her mind upon salmon, but there was no salmon in the house. It was however procured with great expedition, and when it came to the table, she found that her fright had taken away her stomach, which indeed she thought no great loss, for she could never believe that any thing at an inn could be cleanly got.

Dinner was now over, and the company proposed, for I was now past the condition of making overtures, that we should pursue our original design of visiting the gardens. *Anthea* declared that she could not imagine what pleasure we expected from the sight of a few green trees and a little gravel, and two or three pits of clear water; that for her part she hated walking till the cool of the evening, and thought it very likely to rain; and again wished that she had staid at home. We then reconciled ourselves to our disappointment, and began to talk on common subjects, when *Anthea* told us, that since we came to see gardens, she would not hinder our satisfaction. We all rose, and walked through the inclosures for some time, with no other trouble than the necessity of watching lest a frog should hop across the way, which *Anthea* told us would certainly kill her, if she should happen to see him.

Frogs, it fell out, there were none; but when we were within a furlong of the gardens, *Anthea* saw some sheep, and heard the wether clink his bell, which she was certain was not hung upon him for nothing, and therefore no assurances nor intreaties should prevail upon her to go a step further; she was sorry to disappoint the company but her life was dearer to her than ceremony.

We came back to the inn, and *Anthea* now discovered that there was no time to be lost in returning, for the night would come upon us, and a thousand misfortunes might happen in the dark. The horses were immediatly harnessed, and *Anthea*, having wondered what could seduce her to stay so long, was eager to set out. But we had now a new scene of terror, every man we saw was a robber, and we were ordered sometimes to drive hard, lest a traveller whom we saw behind should overtake us; and sometimes to stop, lest we should come up with him who was passing before us. She alarmed many an honest man, by begging him to spare her life as he passed by the coach, and drew me into fifteen quarrels with persons who increased her fright, by kindly stopping to inquire whether they could assist us. At last we came home, and she told her company next day what a pleasant ride she had been taking.

I suppose, Sir, I need not inquire of you what deductions may be made from this narrative, nor what happiness can arise from the society of that woman who mistakes cowardice for elegance, and imagines all delicacy to consist in refusing to be pleased.

I am, &c.

N° 35. TUESDAY, JULY 17, 1750.

——Non pronuba Juno,
Non Hymenæus adest, non illi Gratia lecto.

OVID.

Without connubial Juno's aid they wed;
Nor Hymen, nor the Graces bless the bed.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have hitherto delayed the performance of the promise, by which you gave us reason to hope for another paper upon matrimony, I imagine you desirous of collecting more materials than your own experience or observation can supply; and I shall therefore lay candidly before you an account of my own entrance into the conjugal state.

I was about eight-and-twenty years old, when, having tried the diversions of the town till I began to be weary, and being awakened into attention to more serious business, by the failure of an attorney to whom I had implicity trusted the conduct of my fortune, I resolved to take my estate into my own care, and methodise my whole life according to the strictest rules of economical prudence.

In pursuance of this scheme, I took leave of my acquaintance, who dismissed me with numberless jests upon my new system; having first endeavour-

ed to divert me from a design so little worthy of a man of wit, by ridiculous accounts of the ignorance and rusticity into which many had sunk in their retirement, after having distinguished themselves in taverns and playhouses, and given hopes of rising to uncommon eminence among the gay part of mankind.

When I came first into the country, which, by a neglect not uncommon among young heirs, I had never seen since the death of my father, I found every thing in such confusion, that being utterly without practice in business, I had great difficulties to encounter in disentangling the perplexities of my circumstances; they however gave way to diligent application, and I perceived that the advantage of keeping my own accounts would very much overbalance the time which they could require.

I had now visited my tenants, surveyed my land, and repaired the old house, which, for some years, had been running to decay. These proofs of pecuniary wisdom began to recommend me, as a sober, judicious, thriving gentleman, to all my graver neighbours of the country, who never failed to celebrate my management in opposition to *Thriftleſs* and *Latterwit*, two smart fellows, who had estates in the same part of the kingdom, which they visited now and then in a frolick, to take up their rents beforehand, debauch a milk-maid, make a feast for the village, and tell stories of their own intrigues, and then rode post back to town to spend their money.

It was doubtful, however, for some time, whether I should be able to hold my resolution; but a short perseverance removed all suspicions.

I rose every day in reputation, by the decency of my conversation and the regularity of my conduct, and was mentioned with great regard at the assizes, as a man very fit to be put in commission for the peace.

During the confusion of my affairs, and the daily necessity of visiting farms, adjusting contracts, letting leases, and superintending repairs, I found very little vacuity in my life, and therefore had not many thoughts of marriage; but, in a little while, the tumult of business subsided, and the exact method which I had established enabled me to dispatch my accounts with great facility. I had, therefore, now upon my hands the task of finding means to spend my time, without falling back into the poor amusements which I had hitherto indulged, or changing them for the sports of the field, which I saw pursued with so much eagerness by the gentlemen of the country, that they were indeed the only pleasures in which I could promise myself any partaker.

The inconvenience of this situation naturally disposed me to wish for a companion; and the known value of my estate, with my reputation for frugality and prudence, easily gained me admission into every family; for I soon found that no inquiry was made after any other virtue, nor any testimonal necessary, but of my freedom from incumbrances, and my care of what they termed the *main chance*. I saw, not without indignation, the eagerness with which the daughters, wherever I came, were set out to show; nor could I consider them in a state much different from prostitution, when I found them ordered to play their

airs before me, and to exhibit by some seeming chance, specimens of their music, their work, or their housewifery. No sooner was I placed at table, than the young lady was called upon to pay me some civility or other; nor could I find means of escaping, from either father or mother, some account of their daughters' excellencies, with a declaration that they were now leaving the world, and had no business on this side the grave, but to see their children happily disposed of; that she whom I had been pleased to compliment at table, was indeed the chief pleasure of their age, so good, so dutiful, so great a relief to her mamma in the care of the house, and so much her papa's favourite for her cheerfulness and wit, that it would be with the last reluctance that they should part; but to a worthy gentleman in the neighbourhood, whom they might often visit, they would not so far consult their own gratification as to refuse her; and their tenderness should be shewn in her fortune, whenever a suitable settlement was proposed.

As I knew these overtures not to proceed from any preference of me before another equally rich, I could not but look with pity on young persons condemned to be set to auction, and made cheap by injudicious commendations; for how could they know themselves offered and rejected a hundred times, without some loss of that soft elevation, and maiden dignity, so necessary to the completion of female excellence?

I shall not trouble you with a history of the stratagems practised upon my judgment, or the allurements tried upon my heart, which, if you have, in any part of your life, been acquainted with

rural politicks, you will easily conceive. Their arts have no great variety, they think nothing worth their care but money, and supposing its influence the same upon all the world, seldom endeavour to deceive by any other means than false computations.

I will not deny, that, by hearing myself loudly commended for my discretion, I began to set some value upon my character, and was unwilling to lose my credit by marrying for love. I therefore resolved to know the fortune of the lady whom I should address, before I inquired after her wit, delicacy, or beauty.

This determination led me to Mitissa, the daughter of Chrysophilus, whose person was at least without deformity, and whose manners were free from reproach, as she had been bred up at a distance from all common temptations. To Mitissa therefore I obtained leave from her parents to pay my court, and was referred by her again to her father, whose direction she was resolved to follow. The question then was, only, what should be settled. The old gentleman made an enormous demand, with which I refused to comply. Mitissa was ordered to exert her power; she told me, that if I could refuse her papa, I had no love for her; that she was an unhappy creature, and that I was a perfidious man; then she burst into tears and fell into fits. All this, as I was no passionate lover, had little effect. She next refused to see me, and because I thought myself obliged to write in terms of distress, they had once hopes of starving me into measures; but finding me inflexible, the father complied with my proposal, and told

me he liked me the more for being so good at a bargain.

I was now married to Mitissa, and was to experience the happiness of a match made without passion. Mitissa soon discovered, that she was equally prudent with myself, and had taken a husband only to be at her own command, and to have a chariot at her own call. She brought with her an old maid recommended by her mother, who taught her all the arts of domestick management, and was, on every occasion, her chief agent and directress. They soon invented one reason or other, to quarrel with all my servants, and either prevailed on me to turn them away, or treated them so ill, that they left me of themselves, and always supplied their places with some brought from my wife's relations. Thus they established a family, over which I had no authority, and which was in a perpetual conspiracy against me; for Mitissa considered herself as having a separate interest, and thought nothing her own, but what she laid up without my knowledge. For this reason she brought me false accounts of the expences of the house, joined with my tenants in complaints of hard times, and by means of a steward of her own, took rewards for soliciting abatements of the rent. Her great hope is to outlive me, that she may enjoy what she has thus accumulated, and therefore she is always contriving some improvements of her jointure land, and once tried to procure an injunction to hinder me from felling timber upon it for repairs. Her father and mother assist her in her projects, and are frequently hinting that she is ill used, and reproaching me

with the presents that other ladies receive from their husbands.

Such, Sir, was my situation for seven years, till at last my patience was exhausted, and having one day invited her father to my house, I laid the state of my affairs before him, detected my wife in several of her frauds, turned out her steward, charged a constable with her maid, took my business in my own hands, reduced her to a settled allowance, and now write this account to warn others against marrying those whom they have no reason to esteem. I am, &c.

N° 36. SATURDAY, JULY 21, 1750.

Αμ' εποντο νομηες
Τερποαενοι συριγξι δολον δ' ουτι προνοησαν.

HOMER.

——Piping on their reeds, the shepherds go,
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe.

POPE.

THERE is scarcely any species of poetry that has allured more readers, or excited more writers, than the pastoral. It is generally pleasing, because it entertains the mind with representations of scenes familiar to almost every imagination, and of which all can equally judge whether they are well described. It exhibits a life, to which we have been always accustomed to associate peace, and leisure, and innocence: and therefore we readily set open the heart for the admission of its

images, which contribute to drive away cares and perturbations, and suffer ourselves, without resistance, to be transported to elysian regions, where we are to meet with nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentment; where every gale whispers pleasure, and every shade promises repose.

It has been maintained by some who love to talk of what they do not know, that pastoral is the most ancient poetry; and indeed, since it is probable that poetry is nearly of the same antiquity with rational nature, and since the life of the first men was certainly rural, we may reasonably conjecture, that, as their ideas would necessarily be borrowed from those objects with which they were acquainted, their composures, being filled chiefly with such thoughts on the visible creation as must occur to the first observers, were pastoral hymns, like those which *Milton* introduces the original pair singing, in the day of innocence, to the praise of their Maker.

For the same reason that pastoral poetry was the first employment of the human imagination, it is generally the first literary amusement of our minds. We have seen fields, and meadows, and groves, from the time that our eyes opened upon life; and are pleased with birds, and brooks, and breezes, much earlier than we engage among the actions and passions of mankind. We are therefore delighted with rural pictures, because we know the original at an age when our curiosity can be very little awakened, by descriptions of courts which we never beheld, or representations of passion which we never felt.

The satisfaction received from this kind of writ-

ing not only begins early, but lasts long; we do not, as we advance into the intellectual world, throw it away among other childish amusements and pastimes, but willingly return to it in any hour of indolence and relaxation. The images of true pastoral have always the power of exciting delight, because the works of nature, from which they are drawn, have always the same order and beauty, and continue to force themselves upon our thoughts, being at once obvious to the most careless regard, and more than adequate to the strongest reason and severest contemplation. Our inclination to stillness and tranquillity is seldom much lessened by long knowledge of the busy and tumultuary part of the world. In childhood we turn our thoughts to the country, as to the region of pleasure; we recur to it in old age as a port of rest, and perhaps with that secondary and adventitious gladness, which every man feels on reviewing those places, or recollecting those occurrences, that contributed to his youthful enjoyments, and bring him back to the prime of life, when the world was gay with the bloom of novelty, when mirth wantoned at his side, and hope sparkled before him.

The sense of this universal pleasure has invited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances, in which they have generally succeeded, after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images and combination from one to another, till he that reads the title of a poem may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man, after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his knowledge

enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes.

The range of pastoral is indeed narrow; for though nature itself, philosophically considered, be inexhaustible, yet its general effects on the eye and on the ear are uniform, and imcapable of much variety of description. Poetry cannot dwell upon the minuter distinctions, by which one species differs from another, without departing from that simplicity of grandeur which fills the imagination; nor dissect the latent qualities of things, without losing its general power of gratifying every mind by recalling its conceptions. However, as each age makes some discoveries, and those discoveries are by degrees generally known, as new plants or modes of culture are introduced, and by little and little become common, pastoral might receive, from time to time, small augmentations, and exhibit once in a century a scene somewhat varied.

But pastoral subjects have been often, like others, taken into the hands of those that were not qualified to adorn them, men to whom the face of nature was so little known, that they have drawn it only after their own imagination, and changed or distorted her features, that their portraits might appear something more than servile copies from their predecessors.

Not only the images of rural life, but the occasions on which they can be properly produced, are few and general. The state of a man confined to the employments and pleasures of the country, is so little diversified, and exposed to so few of those accidents which produce perplexities,

terrors, and surprises, in more complicated transactions, that he can be shewn but seldom in such circumstances as attract curiosity. His ambition is without policy, and his love without intrigue. He has no complaints to make of his rival, but that he is richer than himself; nor any disasters to lament, but a cruel mistress, or a bad harvest.

The conviction of the necessity of some new source of pleasures induced *Sannazarius* to remove the scene from the fields to the sea, to substitute fishermen for shepherds, and derive his sentiments from the piscatory life; for which he has been censured by succeeding criticks, because the sea is an object of terror, and by no means proper to amuse the mind and lay the passions asleep. Against this objection he might be defended by the established maxim, that the poet has a right to select his images, and is no more obliged to shew the sea in a storm, than the land under an inundation; but may display all the pleasures, and conceal the dangers of the water, as he may lay his shepherd under a shady beech, without giving him an ague, or letting a wild beast loose upon him.

There are, however, two defects in the piscatory eclogue, which perhaps cannot be supplied. The sea, though in hot countries it is considered by those who live, like *Sannazarius*, upon the coast as a place of pleasure and diversion, has notwithstanding much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer. When he has once shewn the sun rising or setting upon it, curled its waters with the vernal breeze, rolled the waves in gentle succession to

the shore, and enumerated the fish sporting in the shallows, he has nothing remaining but what is common to all other poetry, the complaint of a nymph for a drowned lover, or the indignation of a fisher that his oysters are refused, and Mycon's accepted.

Another obstacle to the general reception of this kind of poetry, is the ignorance of maritime pleasures, in which the greater part of mankind must always live. To all the inland inhabitants of every region, the sea is only known as an immense diffusion of waters, over which men pass from one country to another, and in which life is frequently lost. They have, therefore, no opportunity of tracing in their own thoughts the descriptions of winding shores and calm bays, nor can look on the poem in which they are mentioned, with other sensations than on a sea chart, or the metrical geography of *Dionysius*.

This defect *Sannazarius* was hindered from perceiving, by writing in a learned language to readers generally acquainted with the works of nature; but if he had made his attempt in any vulgar tongue, he would soon have discovered how vainly he had endeavoured to make that loved which was not understood.

I am afraid it will not be found easy to improve the pastorals of antiquity, by any great additions or diversifications. Our descriptions may indeed differ from those of Virgil, as an English from an Italian summer, and, in some respects, as modern from ancient life; but as nature is in both countries nearly the same, and as poetry has to do rather with the passions of men, which are uni-

form, than their customs, which are changeable, the varieties which time or place can furnish will be inconsiderable: and I shall endeavour to shew, in the next paper, how little the later ages have contributed to the improvement of the rustick muse.

N° 37. TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1750.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armento vocabat, Amphion Dircæus.

VIRG.

Such strains I sing as once Amphyon play'd,
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.

ELPHINSTON.

In writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor criticks of latter times seem to have paid sufficent regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficulties, by advancing principles, which, having no foundation in the nature of things, are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more distinct and exact idea of this kind of writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the pastorals of Virgil, from whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that, every advantage of nature, and of fortune, concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment

enlightened with all the learning of one of the brightest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompense the want of novelty by exactness; that, taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil, for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoever therefore may, according to the common course of things, happen in the country, may afford a subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occur to those who are versed in the writings of the modern criticks, that there is no mention of the golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of a rural state to remote times, nor can I perceive that any writer has consistently preserved the Arcadian manners and sentiments. The only reason, that I have read, on which this rule has been founded, is, that, according to the customs of modern life, it is improbable that shepherds should be capable of harmonious numbers, or delicate sentiments; and therefore the reader must exalt his ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying his thoughts back to the age in which the care of herds and flocks was the employment of the wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led into their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not in general as a representation of rural nature, and consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the country affords pleasure or employment, but simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actually tending sheep, and busied in the lowest and most laborious offices; from whence they very readily concluded, since characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the sentiments must sink to the level of the speakers, or the speakers must be raised to the height of the sentiments.

In consequence of these original errors, a thousand precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary manners of the golden age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in pastoral, than lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, among which are heard the gentle whispers of chaste fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous impatience. In pastoral, as in other writings, chastity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and purity of manners to be represented; not because the poet is confined to the images of the golden age, but because, having the subject in his own choice, he ought always to consult the interest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay down other principles, not very consistent with their general plan; for they tell us, that to support the character of the shepherd, it is proper that all re-

finement should be avoided, and that some slight instances of ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil is supposed to have forgot the name of Anaximander, and in Pope the term Zodiack is too hard for a rustick apprehension. But if we place our shepherds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral, by obsolete terms and rustick words, which they very learnedly call Doric, without reflecting that they thus become authors of a mingled dialect which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personages, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity;

Diggon Davie, I bid her good-day,
Or, Diggon her is, or I mistay.
Dig. *Her was her while it was day-light,*
But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence. Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at the same time that a shepherd learns theology he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which, not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil—

Nunc scio quid sit Amor. duris in cautibus illum
Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.

I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
And at the dugs of savage tygers fed;
Alien of birth, usurper of the plains.

DRYDEN.

which Pope endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater impropriety:

I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main,
More fierce than tygers on the Lybian plain;
Thou wert from Ætna's burning entrails torn;
Begot in tempests, and in thunders born!

Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature, are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because it wants that exaltation above common

life, which in tragick or heroick writings often reconciles us to bold flight, and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristick, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolick, though rejected by the criticks; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because, though the scene lies in the country, the song being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction, for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem, that the occasion which is supposed to produce it, be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the more busy part of mankind. It is therefore improper to give the title of a pastoral to verses, in which the speakers, after the slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errors in the church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious per-

son, whom, when once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer any labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep, and lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without art or learning, genius or study.

It is part of Claudian's character of his rustick, that he computes his time not by the succession of consuls, but of harvests. Those who pass their days in retreats distant from the theatres of business, are always least likely to hurry their imagination with publick affairs.

The facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral style, has incited many writers, from whom more judgment might have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which the occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; and as one absurdity must naturally be expected, to make way for another, they have written with an utter disregard both of life and nature, and filled their productions with mythological allusions, with incredible fictions, and with sentiments which neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since the change which religion has made in the whole system of the world.

N° 38. SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1750.

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordidus tecti, caret invidenda
Sobrius aula.

HOR.

The man within the golden mean,
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruin'd cell,
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell;
And in himself serenely great,
Declines an envied room of state.

FRANCIS.

AMONG many parallels which men of imagination have drawn between the natural and moral state of the world, it has been observed, that happiness, as well as virtue, consists in mediocrity; that to avoid every extreme is necessary, even to him who has no other care than to pass through the present state with ease and safety; and that the middle path is the road of security, on either side of which are not only the pitfals of vice, but the precipices of ruin.

Thus the maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, μετρον αριστον, *Mediocrity is best*, has been long considered as an universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature. The experience of every age seems to have given it new confirmation, and to shew that nothing, however specious or alluring, is pursued with propriety, or enjoyed with safety, beyond certain limits.

Even the gifts of nature, which may truly be considered as the most solid and durable of all terrestrial advantages, are found, when they exceed the middle point, to draw the possessor into many calamities, easily avoided by others that have been less bountifully enriched or adorned. We see every day women perish with infamy, by having been too willing to set their beauty to shew, and others, though not with equal guilt or misery, yet with very sharp remorse, languishing in decay, neglect, and obscurity, for having rated their youthful charms at too high a price. And indeed, if the opinion of Bacon be thought to deserve much regard, very few sighs will be vented for eminent and superlative elegance of form; "for beautiful women," says he, "are seldom "of any great accomplishments, because they, "for the most part, study behaviour rather than "virtue."

Health and vigour, and a happy constitution of the corporeal frame, are of absolute necessity to the enjoyment of the comforts, and to the performance of the duties of life, and requisite in yet a greater measure to the accomplishment of any thing illustrious or distinguished; yet even these, if we can judge by their apparent consequences, are sometimes not very beneficial to those on whom they are most liberally bestowed. They that frequent the chambers of the sick, will generally find the sharpest pains, and most stubborn maladies, among them whom confidence of the force of nature formerly betrayed to neligence and irregularity; and that superfluity of strength, which was at once their boast and their snare, has often

in the latter part of life, no other effect than that it continues them long in impotence and anguish.

These gifts of nature are, however always blessings in themselves, and to be acknowledged with gratitude to him that gives them; since they are, in their regular and legitimate effects, productive of happiness, and prove pernicious only by voluntary corruption or idle negligence. And as there is little danger of pursuing them with too much ardour or anxiety, because no skill or diligence can hope to procure them, the uncertainty of their influence upon our lives is mentioned, not to depreciate their real value, but to repress the discontent and envy to which the want of them often gives occasion in those who do not enough suspect their own frailty, nor consider how much less is the calamity of not possessing great powers, than of not using them aright.

Of all those things that make us superior to others, there is none so much within the reach of our endeavoures as riches, nor any thing more eagerly or constantly desired. Poverty is an evil always in our view, an evil complicated with so many circumstances of uneasiness and vexation, that every man is studious to avoid it. Some degree of riches is therefore required, that we may be exempt from the gripe of necessity; when this purpose is once attained, we naturally wish for more, that the evil which is regarded with so much horror, may be yet at a greater distance from us; as he that has once felt or dreaded the paw of a savage, will not be at rest till they are parted by some barrier, which may take away all possibility of a second attack.

To this point, if fear be not unreasonably indulged, Cleobulus would, perhaps, not refuse to extend his mediocrity. But it almost always happens, that the man who grows rich changes his notions of poverty, states his wants by some new measure, and from flying the enemy that pursued him, bends his endeavours to overtake those whom he sees before him. The power of gratifying his appetites increases their demands; a thousand wishes crowd in upon him, importunate to be satisfied, and vanity and ambition open prospects to desire, which still grow wider as they are more contemplated.

Thus in time want is enlarged without bounds; an eagerness for increase of possessions deluges the soul, and we sink into the gulphs of insatiability, only because we do not sufficiently consider, that all real need is very soon supplied, and all real danger of its invasion easily precluded; that the claims of vanity, being without limits, must be denied at last; and that the pain of repressing them is less pungent before they have been long accustomed to compliance.

Whosoever shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches, will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue to obtain it. For all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune, is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason seldom remarked which

makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened, easily sinks into neglect of his affairs; and he that thinks he can afford to be negligent, is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities, which his inexperience will render unsurmountable; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed, and will be at last torn to pieces by the vultures that always hover over fortune in decay.

When the plains of India were burnt up by a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Raschid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting around them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a being of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæa; "Fly not from your "benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to "offer you gifts, which only your own folly can "make vain. You here pray for water, and "water I will bestow; let me know with how "much you will be satisfied: speak not rashly; "consider, that of whatever can be enjoyed by the

"body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. "When you remember the pain of thirst, do not "forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, "tell me your request."

"O Being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, "let thine eye pardon my confusion. I entreat a "little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, "and in winter never overflow." "It is grant-"ed," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet scattered its rills over the meadows; the flowers renewed their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foliage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. "I request," says Raschid, "that thou wilt turn the Ganges "through my grounds, with all his waters, and "all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly repined in his heart, that he had not made the same petition before him; when the Genius spoke, "Rash man, be not insatiable! remember, "to thee that is nothing which thou canst not "use; and how are thy wants greater than the "wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The Genius then retired towards the river, and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the Ganges

were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him.

N° 39. TUESDAY, JULY 31, 1750.

Infelix—nulli bene nupta marito.

AUSONIUS.

Unblest, still doom'd to wed with misery.

THE condition of the female sex has been frequently the subject of compassion to medical writers, because their constitution of body is such, that every state of life brings its peculiar diseases; they are placed, according to the proverb, between Scylla and Charybdis, with no other choice than of dangers equally formidable; and whether they embrace marriage, or determine upon a single life, are exposed, in consequence of their choice, to sickness, misery, and death.

It were to be wished that so great a degree of natural infelicity might not be increased by adventitious and artificial miseries; and that beings whose beauty we cannot behold without admiration, and whose delicacy we cannot contemplate without tenderness, might be suffered to enjoy every alleviation of their sorrows. But, however it has happened, the custom of the world seems to

have been formed in a kind of conspiracy against them, though it does not appear but they had themselves an equal share in its establishment; and prescriptions which, by whomsoever they were begun, are now of long continuance, and by consequence of great authority, seem to have almost excluded them from content, in whatsoever condition they shall pass their lives.

If they refuse the society of men, and continue in that state which is reasonably supposed to place happiness most in their own power, they seldom give those that frequent their conversation any exalted notions of the blessing of liberty; for whether it be that they are angry to see with what inconsiderate eagerness other heedless females rush into slavery, or with what absurd vanity the married ladies boast the change of their condition, and condemn the heroines who endeavoured to assert the natural dignity of their sex; whether they are conscious that, like barren countries, they are free, only because they were never thought to deserve the trouble of a conquest, or imagine that their sincerity is not always unsuspected, when they declare their contempt of men; it is certain, that they generally appear to have some great and incessant cause of uneasiness, and that many of them have at last been persuaded, by powerful rhetoricians, to try the life which they had so long contemned, and put on the bridal ornaments at a time when they least became them.

What are the real causes of the impatience which the ladies discover in a virgin state, I shall perhaps take some other occasion to examine. That it is not to be envied for its happiness appears from the

solicitude with which it is avoided; from the opinion universally prevalent among the sex, that no woman continues long in it but because she is not invited to forsake it; from the disposition always shewn to treat old maids as the refuse of the world; and from the willingness with which it is often quitted at last, by those whose experience has enabled them to judge at leisure, and decide with authority.

Yet such is life, that whatever is proposed, it is much easier to find reasons for rejecting than embracing. Marriage, though a certain security from the reproach and solicitude of antiquated virginity, has yet, as it is usually conducted, many disadvantages, that take away much from the pleasure which society promises, and might afford, if pleasures and pains were honestly shared, and mutual confidence inviolably preserved.

The miseries, indeed, which many ladies suffer under conjugal vexations, are to be considered with great pity, because their husbands are often not taken by them as objects of affection, but forced upon them by authority and violence, or by persuasion and importunity, equally resistless when urged by those whom they have been always accustomed to reverence and obey; and it very seldom appears, that those who are thus despotick in the disposal of their children, pay any regard to their domestick and personal felicity, or think it so much to be inquired whether they will be happy, as whether they will be rich.

It may be urged, in extenuation of this crime, which parents, not in any other respect to be numbered with robbers and assassins, frequently commit,

that, in their estimation, riches and happiness are equivalent terms. They have passed their lives with no other wish than that of adding acre to acre, and filling one bag after another, and imagine the advantage of a daughter sufficiently considered, when they have secured her a large jointure, and given her reasonable expectations of living in the midst of those pleasures, with which she had seen her father and mother solacing their age.

There is an economical oracle received among the prudential part of the world, which advises fathers *to marry their daughters, lest they should marry themselves*;—by which I suppose it is implied, that women left to their own conduct generally unite themselves with such partners as can contribute very little to their felicity. Who was the author of this maxim, or with what intention it was originally uttered, I have not yet discovered; but imagine, that however solemnly it may be transmitted, or however implicitly received, it can confer no authority which nature has denied, it cannot license Titius to be unjust, lest Caia should be imprudent; nor give right to imprision for life, lest liberty should be ill employed.

That the ladies have sometimes incurred imputations which might naturally produce edicts not much in their favour, must be confessed by their warmest advocates; and I have indeed seldom observed, that when the tenderness or virtue of their parents has preserved them from forced marriage, and left them at large to chuse their own path in the labyrinth of life, they have made any great advantage of their liberty: they commonly take the

opportunity of independence to trifle away youth, and lose their bloom in a hurry of diversions, recurring in a succession too quick to leave room for any settled reflection; they see the world without gaining experience, and at last regulate their choice by motives trifling as those of a girl, or mercenary as those of a miser.

Melanthia came to town upon the death of her father, with a very large fortune, and with the reputation of a much larger; she was therefore followed and caressed by many men of rank, and by some of understanding; but having an insatiable desire of pleasure, she was not at leisure, from the park, the gardens, the theatres, visits, assemblies, and masquerades, to attend seriously to any proposal, but was still impatient for a new flatterer, and neglected marriage as always in her power; till in time her admirers fell away, wearied with expence, disgusted at her folly, or offended by her inconstancy; she heard of concerts to which she was not invited, and was more than once forced to sit still at an assembly for want of a partner. In this distress, chance threw in her way Philotryphus, a man vain, glittering, and thoughtless as herself, who had spent a small fortune in equipage and dress, and was shining in the last suit for which his tailor would give him credit. He had been long endeavouring to retrieve his extravagance by marriage, and therefore soon paid his court to Melanthia, who, after some weeks of insensibility, saw him at a ball, and was wholly overcome by his performance in a minuet. They married; but a man cannot always dance, and Philotryphus had no other method of pleasing: however, as neither was

in any great degree vicious, they live together with no other unhappiness, than vacuity of mind, and that tastelessness of life, which proceeds from a satiety of juvenile pleasures, and an utter inability to fill their place by nobler employments. As they have known the fashionable world at the same time, they agree in their notions of all those subjects on which they ever speak, and being able to add nothing to the ideas of each other, are not much inclined to conversation, but very often join in one wish, That they could sleep more, and think less.

Argyris, after having refused a thousand offers, at last consented to marry Cotylus, the younger brother of a duke, a man without elegance of mien, beauty of person, or force of understanding; who, while he courted her, could not always forbear allusions to her birth, and hints how cheaply she would purchase an alliance to so illustrious a family. His conduct from the hour of his marriage has been unsufferably tyrannical, nor has he any other regard to her than what arises from his desire that her appearance may not disgrace him. Upon this principle, however, he always orders that she should be gaily dressed and splendidly attended; and she has, among all her mortifications, the happiness to take place of her eldest sister.

N° 40. SATURDAY, AUGUST 4, 1750.

——Nec dicet, cur ego amicum
Offendam in nugis? Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel.

HOR.

Nor say, for trifles why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove.

FRANCIS.

It has been remarked, that authors are *genus irritabile*, "a generation very easily put out of temper," and that they seldom fail of giving proofs of their irrascibility upon the slightest attack of criticism, or the most gentle or modest offer of advice and information.

Writers being best acquainted with one another, have represented this character as prevailing among men of literature, which a more extensive view of the world would have shewn them to be diffused through all human nature, to mingle itself with every species of ambition and desire of praise, and to discover its effects with greater or less restraint, and under disguises more or less artful, in all places and all conditions.

The quarrels of writers, indeed, are more observed, because they necessarily appeal to the decision of the publick. Their enmities are incited by applauses from their parties, and prolonged by treacherous encouragement for general diversion; and when the contest happens to rise high between men of genius and learning, its memory is contin-

ed for the same reason as its vehemence was at first promoted, because it gratifies the malevolence or curiosity of readers, and relieves the vacancies of life with amusement and laughter. The personal disputes, therefore, of rivals in wit are sometimes transmitted to posterity, when the grudges and heart-burnings of men less conspicuous, though carried on with equal bitterness, and productive of greater evils, are exposed to the knowledge of those only whom they nearly affect, and suffered to pass off and be forgotten among common and casual transactions.

The resentment which the discovery of a fault or folly produces, must bear a certain proportion to our pride, and will regularly be more acrimonious as pride is more immediately the principle of action. In whatever therefore we wish or imagine ourselves to excel, we shall always be displeased to have our claims to reputation disputed, and more displeased, if the accomplishment be such as can expect reputation only for its reward. For this reason, it is common to find men break out into rage at any insinuations to the disadvantage of their wit, who have borne with great patience reflections on their morals; and of women it has been always known, that no censure wounds so deeply, or rankles so long, as that which charges them with want of beauty.

As men frequently fill their imaginations with trifling pursuits, and please themselves most with things of small importance, I have often known very severe and lasting malevolence excited by unlucky censures, which would have fallen without any effect, had they not happened to wound a part remarkably tender. Gustulus, who valued

new accquaintance, to take lodgings in different parts of the town, and had frequent occasion when they met, to bewail the distance at which they were placed, and the uncertainty which each experienced of finding the other at home.

Thus are the fondest and firmest friendships dissolved, by such openness and sincerity, as interrupt our enjoyment of our own approbation, or recal us to the remembrance of those failings, which we are more willing to indulge than to correct.

It is by no means necessary to imagine, that he who is offended at advice, was ignorant of the fault, and resents the admonition as a false charge; for perhaps it is most natural to be enraged, when there is the strongest conviction of our own guilt. While we can easily defend our character, we are no more disturbed at an accusation, than we are alarmed by an enemy whom we are sure to conquer; and whose attack, therefore, will bring us honour without danger. But when a man feels the reprehension of a friend seconded by his own heart, he is easily heated into resentment and revenge, either because he hoped that the fault of which he was conscious had escaped the notice of others; or that his friend had looked upon it with tenderness and extenuation, and excused it for the sake of his other virtues; or had considered him as too wise to need advice, or too delicate to be shocked with reproach; or because we cannot feel without pain those reflections roused, which we have been endeavouring to lay asleep; and when pain has produced anger, who would not willingly believe, that it ought to be discharged on others, rather than on himself?

The resentment produced by sincerity, whatever be its immediate cause, is so certain, and generally so keen, that very few have magnanimity sufficient for the practice of a duty, which, above most others, exposes its votaries to hardships and persecutions; yet friendship without it is of very little value, since the great use of so close an intimacy is, that our virtues may be guarded and encouraged, and our vices repressed in their first appearance by timely detection and salutary remonstrances.

Is is decreed by Providence, that nothing truly valuable shall be obtained in our present state, but with difficulty and danger. He that hopes for that advantage which is to be gained from unrestrained communication, must sometimes hazard by unpleasing truths that friendship which he aspires to merit. The chief rule to be observed in the exercise of this dangerous office, is to preserve it pure from all mixture of interest or vanity; to forbear admonition or reproof, when our consciences tell us that they are incited, not by the hopes of reforming faults, but the desire of shewing our discernment, or gratifying our own pride by the mortification of another. It is not indeed certain that the most refined caution will find a proper time for bringing a man to the knowledge of his own failings, or the most zealous benevolence reconcile him to that judgment, by which they are detected; but he who endeavours only the happiness of him whom he reproves, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend, and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

N° 41. TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1750.

Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.

MART.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget;
They stretch the limits of this narrow span,
And by enjoying, live past life again.

F. LEWIS.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superior and celestial nature of the soul of man. We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities, than the preservation of themselves, or their species, requires; they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their bodies, with few other

ideas than such as corporal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young, proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and after a short absence, if brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their conclusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct; and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that, to distinguish them, is the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride. To give an accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not *completely* understood, is impossible; we do not

know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely, he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments compared with experiments, has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence, and exhibits the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind, upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which may be said to place us in the class of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge, and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures. Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to *have* existed by the effects which it leaves behind.

The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are affected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us, that we cannot take the whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves riches, honours, and delights, without intermingling those vexations and anxieties, with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can generally soothe ourselves to tranquillity whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is, therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful, to amuse themselves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past: for the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form. But the images which memory presents are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already existed, and left their signature behind them impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of rasure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid; and are, indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once reposited, as Dryden expresses it, in the sacred treasure of the past, is

out of the reach of accident or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness or another's malice:

——*Non tamen irritum*
Quodcunque retro est efficiet; neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.

Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
The joys I have possess'd in spite of fate are mine.
Not Heav'n itself upon the past has pow'r,
But what has been has been, and I have had my hour.

DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence, by such tokens as excite neither shame nor sorrow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered to distinguish one day from another, is to him that has passed it, as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified through its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horror and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect, which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited, and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it for ever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life, in which memory seems parti-

cularly to claim predominance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave, it is more eminently true;

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.
Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years.
CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour; the changes which are to happen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore, to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expences of that time which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica curis.

Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here suff'ring age a bless'd provision find.
ELPHINSTONE.

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune; and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness be drawn only from recollection, and virtue all that we can recollect with pleasure.

N° 42. SATURDAY, AUGUST 11. 1750.

Mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora.
HOR.
How heavily my time revolves along.
ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR RAMBLER,

I AM no great admirer of grave writings, and therefore very frequeutly lay your papers aside before I have read them through; yet I cannot but confess, that, by slow degrees, you have raised my opinion of your understanding, and that though I believe it will be long before I can be prevailed upon to regard you with much kindness, you have, however, more of my esteem than those whom I sometimes make happy with opportunities to fill my tea-pot, or pick up my fan. I shall therefore chuse you for the confident of my distresses, and ask your counsel with regard to the means of conquering or escaping them, though I never expect from you any of that softness and pliancy which constitutes the perfection of a companion for the ladies; as, in the place where I now am, I have recourse to the mastiff for protection, though I have no intention of making him a lap-dog.

My mamma is a very fine lady, who has more nnmerous and more frequent assemblies at her house, than any other person in the same quarter of the

town. I was bred from my earliest infancy in a perpetual tumult of pleasure, and remember to have heard of little else than messages, visits, playhouses, and balls; of the awkwardness of one woman, and the coquetry of another; the charming convenience of some rising fashion, the difficulty of playing a new game, the incidents of a masquerade, and the dresses of a court-night. I knew before I was ten years old all the rules of paying and receiving visits, and to how much civility every one of my acquaintance was intitled; and was able to return, with the proper degree of reserve or of vivacity, the stated and established answer to every compliment; so that I was very soon celebrated as a wit and a beauty, and had heard before I was thirteen all that is ever said to a young lady. My mother was generous to so uncommon a degree as to be pleased with my advance into life, and allowed me, without envy or reproof, to enjoy the same happiness with herself; though most women about her own age were very angry to see young girls so forward, and many fine gentlemen told her how cruel it was to throw new chains upon mankind, and to tyrannize over them at the same time with her own charms, and those of her daughter.

I have now lived two and twenty years, and have passed of each year nine months in town, and three at Richmond; so that my time has been spent uniformly in the same company, and the same amusements, except as fashion has introduced new diversions, or the revolutions of the gay world have afforded new successions of wits and beaus. However, my mother is so good an œconomist of

pleasure, that I have no spare hours upon my hands; for every morning brings some new appointment, and every night is hurried away by the necessity of making our appearence at different places, and of being with one lady at the opera, and with another at the card-table.

When the time came of settling our scheme of felicity for the summer, it was determined that I should pay a visit to a rich aunt in a remote county. As you know the chief conversation of all tea-tables in the spring, arises from a communication of the manner in which time is to be passed till winter, it was a great relief to the barrenness of our topicks, to relate the pleasures that were in store for me, to describe my uncle's seat, with the park and gardens, the charming walks and beautiful waterfalls; and every one told me how much she envied me, and what satisfaction she had once enjoyed in a situation of the same kind.

As we are all credulous in our own favour, and willing to imagine some latent satisfaction in any thing which we have not experienced, I will confess to you, without-restraint, that I had suffered my head to be filled with expectations of some nameless pleasure in a rural life, and that I hoped for the happy hour that should set me free from noise, and flutter, and ceremony, dismiss me to the peaceful shade, and lull me in content and tranquillity. To solace myself under the misery of delay, I sometimes heard a studious lady of my acquaintance read pastorals, I was delighted with scarce any talk but of leaving the town, and never went to bed without dreaming of groves, and meadows, and frisking lambs.

At length I had all my clothes in a trunk, and saw the coach at the door; I sprung in with ecstacy, quarrelled with my maid for being too long in taking leave of the other servants, and rejoiced as the ground grew less which lay between me and the completion of my wishes. A few days brought me to a large old house, encompassed on three sides with woody hills, and looking from the front on a gentle river, the sight of which renewed all my expectations of pleasure, and gave me some regret for having lived so long without the enjoyment which these delightful scenes were now to afford me. My aunt came out to receive me, but in a dress so far removed from the present fashion, that I could scarcely look upon her without laughter, which would have been no kind requital for the trouble which she had taken to make herself fine against my arrival. The night and the next morning were driven along with inquiries about our family; my aunt then explained our pedigree, and told me stories of my great grandfather's bravery in the civil wars, nor was it less than three days before I could persuade her to leave me to myself.

At last œconomy prevailed; she went in the usual manner about her own affairs, and I was at liberty to range in the wilderness, and sit by the cascade. The novelty of the objects about me pleased me for a while, but after a few days they were new no longer, and I soon began to perceive that the country was not my element; that shades, and flowers, and lawns, and waters, had very soon exhausted all their power of pleasing, and that I had not in myself any fund of satisfac-

tion with which I could supply the loss of my customary amusements.

I unhappily told my aunt, in the first warmth of our embraces, that I had leave to stay with her ten weeks. Six only are yet gone, and how shall I live through the remaining four? I go out and return; I pluck a flower, and throw it away; I catch an insect, and when I have examined its colours, set it at liberty; I fling a pebble into the water, and see one circle spread after another. When it chances to rain, I walk in the great hall, and watch the minute-hand upon the dial, or play with a litter of kittens, which the cat happens to have brought in a lucky time.

My aunt is afraid I shall grow melancholy, and therefore encourages the neighbouring gentry to visit us. They came at first with great eagerness to see the fine lady from London, but when we met we had no common topick on which we could converse; they had no curiosity after plays, operas, or music; and I find as little satisfaction from their accounts of the quarrels or alliances of families, whose names, when once I can escape, I shall never hear. The women have now seen me, know how my gown is made, and are satisfied; the men are generally afraid of me, and say little, because they think themselves not at liberty to talk rudely.

Thus am I condemned to solitude; the day moves slowly forward, and I see the dawn with uneasiness, because I consider that night is at a great distance. I have tried to sleep by a brook, but find its murmurs ineffectual; so that I am forced to be awake at least twelve hours, without

visits, without cards, without laughter, and without flattery. I walk because I am disgusted with sitting still, and sit because I am weary with walking. I have no motive to action, nor any object of love, or hate, or fear, or inclination. I cannot dress with spirit, for I have neither rival nor admirer. I cannot dance without a partner, nor be kind or cruel without a lover.

Such is the life of Euphelia, and such it is likely to continue for a month to come. I have not yet declared against existence, nor called upon the destinies to cut my thread; but I have sincerely resolved not to condemn myself to such another summer, nor too hastily to flatter myself with happiness. Yet I have heard, Mr Rambler, of those who never thought themselves so much at ease as in solitude, and cannot but suspect it to be some way or other my own fault, that, without great pain, either of mind or body, I am thus weary of myself; that the current of youth stagnates, and that I am languishing in a dead calm, for want of some external impulse. I shall therefore think you a benefactor to our sex, if you will teach me the art of living alone; for I am confident, that a thousand and a thousand and a thousand ladies, who affect to talk with ecstacies of the pleasures of the country, are in reality like me, longing for the winter, and wishing to be delivered from themselves by company and diversion.

I am, Sir, Yours,

EUPHELIA.

N° 43. TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 1740.

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet aerius ire,
Sed tamen hæc brevis est, illa perennis aqua.

OVID.

In course impetuous soon the torrent dries,
The brook a constant peaceful stream supplies.

F. LEWIS.

It is observed by those who have written on the constitution of the human body, and the original of those diseases by which it is afflicted, that every man comes into the world morbid, that there is no temperature so exactly regulated but that some humour is fatally predominant, and that we are generally impregnated, in our first entrance upon life, with the seeds of that malady, which, in time, shall bring us to the grave.

This remark has been extended by others to the intellectual faculties. Some that imagine themselves to have looked with more than common penetration into human nature, have endeavoured to persuade us that each man is born with a mind formed peculiarly for certain purposes, and with desires unalterably determined to particular objects, from which the attention cannot be long diverted, and which alone, as they are well or ill pursued, must produce the praise or blame, the happiness or misery of his future life.

This position has not, indeed, been hitherto proved with strength proportionate to the assurance with which it has been advanced, and perhaps will never gain much prevalence by a close examination.

If the doctrine of innate ideas be itself disputable, there seems to be little hope of establishing an opinion, which supposes that even complications of ideas have been given us at our birth, and that we are made by nature ambitious, or covetous, before we know the meaning of either power or money.

Yet as every step in the progression of existence changes our position with respect to the things about us, so as to lay us open to new assaults and particular dangers, and subjects us to inconveniencies from which any other situation is exempt; as a publick or a private life, youth and age, wealth and poverty, have all some evil closely adherent, which cannot wholly be escaped, but by quitting the state to which it is annexed, and submitting to the incumbrances of some other condition; so it cannot be denied, that every difference in the structure of the mind has its advantages and its wants; and that failures and defects being inseparable from humanity, however the powers of understanding be extended or contracted, there will on one side or the other always be an avenue to error or miscarriage.

There seem to be some souls suited to great and others to little employments; some formed to soar aloft, and take in wide views, and others to grovel on the ground, and confine their regard to a narrow sphere. Of these the one is always in danger

of becoming useless by a daring negligence, the other by a scrupulous solicitude; the one collects many ideas, but confused and indistinct; the other is busied in minute accuracy, but without compass and without dignity.

The general error of those who possess powerful and evelated understandings is, that they form schemes of too great extent, and flatter themselves too hastily with success; they feel their own force to be great, and by the complacency with which every man surveys himself, imagine it still greater: they therefore look out for undertakings worthy of their abilities, and engage in them with very little precaution, for they imagine that, without premeditated measures, they shall be able to find expedients in all difficulties. They are naturally apt to consider all prudential maxims as below their regard, to treat with contempt those securities and resources which others know themselves obliged to provide, and disdain to accomplish their purposes by established means and common gradations.

Precipitation thus incited by the pride of intellectual superiority, is very fatal to great designs. The resolution of the combat is seldom equal to the vehemence of the charge. He that meets with an opposition which he did not expect loses his courage. The violence of his first onset is succeeded by a lasting and unconquerable langour; miscarriage makes him fearful of giving way to new hopes; and the contemplation of an attempt in which he has fallen below his own expectations, is painful and vexatious; he therefore naturally turns his attention to more pleasing objects, and

habituates his imagination to other entertainments, till, by slow degrees, he quits his first pursuit, and suffers some other project to take possession of his thoughts, in which the same ardour of mind promises him again certain success, and which disappointments of the same kind compel him to abandon.

Thus too much vigour in the beginning of an undertaking, often intercepts and prevents the steadiness and perseverance always necessary in the conduct of a complicated scheme, where many interests are to be connected, many movements to be adjusted, and the joint effort of distinct and independent powers to be directed to a single point. In all important events which have been suddenly brought to pass, chance has been the agent rather than reason; and therefore, however those who seemed to preside in the transaction, may have been celebrated by such as loved or feared them, succeeding times have commonly considered them as fortunate rather than prudent. Every design in which the connection is regularly traced from the first motion to the last, must be formed and executed by calm intrepidity, and requires not only courage which danger cannot turn aside, but constancy which fatigues cannot weary, and contrivance which impediments cannot exhaust.

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance: it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of a pick-ax, or of one impression of the spade, with the

general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten roads of life, and acquiring a reputation superior to names hourly swept away by time among the refuse of fame, should add to their reason, and their spirit, the power of persisting in their purposes; acquire the art of sapping what they cannot batter, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by obstinate attacks.

The student who would build his knowledge on solid foundations, and proceed by just degrees to the pinnacles of truth, is directed by the great philosopher of France to begin by doubting of his own existence. In like manner, whoever would complete any arduous and intricate enterprise should, as soon as his imagination can cool after the first blaze of hope, place before his own eyes every possible embarrasment that may retard or defeat him. He should first question the probability of success, and then endeavour to remove the objections that he has raised. It is proper, says old *Markham*, to exercise your horse on the more inconvenient side of the course, that if he should in the race, be forced upon it, he may not be discouraged; and *Horace* advises his poetical friend to consider every day as the last which he shall enjoy, because that will always give pleasure which we receive beyond our hopes. If we alarm our-

selves beforehand with more difficulties than we really find, we shall be animated by unexpected facility with double spirit; and if we find our cautions and fears justified by the consequence, there will however happen nothing against which provision has not been made, no sudden shock will be received, nor will the main scheme be disconcerted.

There is indeed some danger lest he that too scrupulously balances probabilities, and too perspicaciously foresees obstacles, should remain always in a state of inaction, without venturing upon attempts on which he may perhaps spend his labour without advantage. But previous despondence is not the fault of those for whom this essay is designed; they who require to be warned against precipitation, will not suffer more fear to intrude into their contemplations than is necessary to allay the effervescence of an agitated fancy. As *Des Cartes* has kindly shewn how a man may prove to himself his own existence, if once he can be prevailed upon to question it, so the ardent and adventurous will not be long without finding some plausible extenuation of the greatest difficulties. Such indeed, is the uncertainity of all human affairs, that security and despair are equal follies; and as it is presumption and arrogance to anticipate triumphs, it is weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages. The numbers that have been stopped in their career of happiness are sufficient to shew the uncertainty of human foresight; but there are not wanting contrary instances of such success obtained against all appearances, as may warrant the boldest flights of genius, if they are supported by unshaken *perseverance*.

N°44. SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1750.

Ὄναρ δ' ἐκ Διός ἐστι.

HOMER.

——————Dreams descend from Jove.

POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAD lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it, as follows:

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted in attending to a lively conversation, when on a sudden I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame, advancing towards me. She was drest in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles, her eyes deep sunk in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terror and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown, and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed, and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and thorns, into a deep soli-

tary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest, from every baleful tree the night-raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horror. In the midst of this tremendous scene my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner:

"Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, "from the vain allurments of a deceitful world, "and learn that pleasure was not designed the "portion of human life. Man was born to mourn "and to be wretched; this is the condition of "all below the stars, and whoever endeavours to "oppose it, acts in contradiction to the will of "Heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments "of youth and social delight, and here consecrate "the solitary hours to lamentation and woe. Mi-"sery is the duty of all sublunary beings, and "every enjoyment is an offence to the deity, who "is to be worshipped only by the mortification of "every sense of pleasure, and the everlasting exer-"cise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yeugh, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched.

In this sad situation, I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waves rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here I determined to plunge, and was just upon the brink, when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form; effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendors were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach the frightful spectre, who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrors she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beauteous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions:

"My name is RELIGION. I am the offspring "of TRUTH and LOVE, and the parent of BENE- "VOLENCE, HOPE, and JOY. That monster "from whose power I have freed you is called "SUPERSTITION; she is the child of DISCON- "TENT, and her followers are FEAR and SORROW. "Thus different as we are, she has often the inso- "lence to assume my name and character, and "seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same, "till she, at length, drives them to the borders "of DESPAIR, that dreadful abyss into which "you were just going to sink.

"Look round and survey the various beauties

" of the globe, which heaven has destined for the " seat of the human race, and consider whether a " world thus exquisitely framed could be meant " for the abode of misery and pain. For what " end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused " such innumerable objects of delight, but that " all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, " and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent " Author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he " has sent, is virtue and obedience; and to reject " them merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable " ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite good- " ness, is the source of created existence; the pro- " per tendency of every rational being, from the " highest order of raptured seraphs to the meanest " rank of men, is to rise incessantly from lower " degrees of happiness to higher. They have " each faculties assigned them for various orders " of delights."

" What," cried I, " is this the language of " RELIGION? Does she lead her votaries through " flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious " life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the " mortifications of penitents, the self-denying exer- " cises of saints and heroes?"

" The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, " do not consist in unbounded " indulgence, or luxurious ease, in the tumult of " passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter " of light amusements. Yielding to immoral " pleasure corrupts the mind, living to animal and " trifling ones debases it; both in their degree " disqualify it for its genuine good, and consign it " over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really

" happy, must make the diligent and regular exer-
" cise of his superior powers his chief attention,
" adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing
" good-will to his fellow-creatures, cultivating
" inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he
" must allow such gratifications as will, by refresh-
" ing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the
" regions inhabited by angelick natures unming-
" led felicity for ever blooms; joy flows there
" with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor needs
" there any mound to check its course. Beings
" conscious of a frame of mind originally diseased,
" as all the human race has cause to be, must use
" the regimen of a stricter self-government. Who-
" ever has been guilty of voluntary excesses, must
" patiently submit both to the painful workings
" of nature, and needful severities of medicine,
" in order to his cure. Still he is intitled to a
" moderate share of whatever alleviating accom-
" modations this fair mansion of his merciful Pa-
" rent affords, consistent with his recovery. And
" in proportion as this recovery advances, the
" liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of
" an amended and improving heart.—So far from
" the horrors of despair is the condition even of
" the guilty. — Shudder, poor mortal, at the
" thought of the gulph into which thou wast but
" now going to plunge.

" While the most faulty have every encourage-
" ment to amend, the more innocent soul will be
" supported with still sweeter consolations under
" all its experience of human infirmities; sup-
" ported by the gladdening assurances that every
" sincere endeavour to outgrow them, shall be

" assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a " one the lowliest self-abasement is but a deep " laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; " since they who faithfully examine and acknow- " ledge what they are, shall be enabled under my " conduct to become what they desire. The " Christian and the hero are inseparable; and to the " aspirings of unassuming trust, and filial confi- " dence, are set no bounds. To him who is ani- " mated with a view of obtaining approbation " from the Sovereign of the universe, no difficulty " is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of " every needful aid, his conflict with the severest " pains and trials, is little more than the vigorous " exercises of a mind in health. His patient de- " pendence on that providence which looks through " all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready ac- " commodation of his thoughts and behaviour to " its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excel- " lent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most " exalted transports. Society is the true sphere " of human virtue. In social, active life, difficul- " ties will perpetually be met with; restraints of " many kinds will be necessary; and studying to " behave right in respect of these, is a discipline " of the human heart, useful to others, and im- " proving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but " where it is necessary to avoid guilt, or to do " good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it " strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or " lessens the generous activity of virtue. The " happiness allotted to man in his present state, is " indeed faint and low, compared with his immor- " tal prospects, and noble capacities; but yet

" whatever portion of it the distributing hand of " Heaven offers to each individual, is a needful sup- " port and refreshment for the present moment, so " far as it may not hinder the attaining of his final " destination.

" Return then with me from continual misery " to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. " Return from the contracted views of solitude to " the proper duties of a relative and dependent " being. Religion is not confined to cells and " closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement. These " are the gloomy doctrines of SUPERSTITION, " by which she endeavours to break those chains " of benevolence and social affection, that link " the welfare of every particular with that of the " whole. Remember that the greatest honour you " can pay to the Author of your being is by such a " cheerful behaviour, as discovers a mind satisfied " with his dispensations."

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village, and a new-risen sun darting his beams through my windows awakened me.

I am, Yours, &c.

N° 45. TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1750.

Ηστις μεγιστη γιγνεται σωτηρια,
Οταν γυνη προς ανδρα μη διχοστατη,
Νυν δ' εκθρα σωτηρια——

EURIP.

This is the chief felicity of life,
That concord smile on the connubial bed;
But now 'tis hatred all——

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH, in the dissertations which you have given us on marriage, very just cautions are laid down against the common causes of infelicity, and the necessity of having, in that important choice, the first regard to virtue, is carefully inculcated; yet I cannot think the subject so much exhausted, but that a little reflection would present to the mind many questions, in the discussion of which great numbers are interested, and many precepts which deserve to be more particularly and forcibly impressed.

You seem, like most of the writers that have gone before you, to have allowed, as an uncontested principle, that Marriage is generally unhappy: but I know not whether a man who professes to think for himself and concludes from his own observations, does not depart from his character when he follows the crowd thus implicity, and receives maxims without recalling them to a new

examination, especially when they comprise so wide a circuit of life, and include such variety of circumstances. As I have an equal right with others to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried, than many who talk of it without experience, I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy; and that most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their nature would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

It is, indeed, common to hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered, that the days which they so much wish to call back, are the days not only of celibacy but of youth, the days of novelty and improvement, of ardour and of hope, of health and vigour of body, of gaiety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful; and I am afraid that whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous the longer it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indiscretion of their choice, is not a sufficient proof that they have chosen ill, since we see the same discontent at every other part of life which we cannot

change. Converse with almost any man grown old in a profession, and you will find him regretting that he did not enter into some different course, to which he too late finds his genius better adapted, or in which he discovers that wealth and honour are more easily attained. "The "merchant," says Horace, "envies the soldier, "and the soldier recounts the felicity of the mer- "chant; the lawyer, when his clients harass him, "calls out for the quiet of the countryman; and "the countryman when business calls him to town, "proclaims that there is no happiness but amidst "opulence and crowds." Every man recounts the inconveniences of his own station, and thinks those of any other less, because he has not felt them. Thus the married praise the ease and freedom of a single state, and the single fly to marriage from the weariness of solitude. From all our observations we may collect with certainty, that misery is the lot of man, but cannot discover in what particular condition it will find most alleviations; or whether all external appendages are not, as we use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes for ease from change of posture; he changes it, and finds himself equally tormented: and of the same kind are the expedients bywhich he endeavours to obviate or elude those uneasinesses to which mortality will always be subject. It is not likely that the married state is eminently miserable, since we see such numbers, whom the death of their partners has set free from it, entering it again.

Wives and husbands are indeed incessantly com-

plaining of each other; and there would be reason for imagining that almost every house was infested with perverseness or oppression beyond human sufferance, did we not know upon how small occasions some minds burst out into lamentations and reproaches, and how naturally every animal revenges his pain upon those who happen to be near, without any nice examination of its cause. We are always willing to fancy ourselves within a little of happiness, and when, with repeated efforts, we cannot reach it, persuade ourselves that it is intercepted by an ill-paired mate, since if we could find any other obstacle, it would be our own fault that it was not removed.

Anatomists have often remarked, that though our diseases are sufficiently numerous and severe, yet when we inquire into the structure of the body, the tenderness of some parts, the minuteness of others, and the immense multiplicity of animal functions that must concur to the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our powers, there appears reason to wonder rather that we are preserved so long, than that we perish so soon; and that our frame subsists for a single day, or hour, without disorder, rather than that it should be broken or obstructed by violence of accidents or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon observation of the manner in which marriage is frequently contracted. When I see the avaricious and crafty taking companions to their tables, and their beds, without any inquiry but after farms and money; or the giddy and thoughtless uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers at a ball; when parents

make articles for their children, without inquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their brothers, and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they have found themselves rejected where they were more solicitous to please; when some marry because their servants cheat them, some because they squander their own money, some because their houses are pestered with company, some because they will live like other people, and some only because they are sick of themselves, I am not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude that society has something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when I find its pleasures so great, that even the ill choice of a companion can hardly overbalance them.

By the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the men and women never saw each other till they were joined beyond the power of parting. It may be suspected that by this method many unsuitable matches were produced, and many tempers associated that were not qualified to give pleasure to each other. Yet, perhaps among a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications and the uniformity of life gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike, and while they felt neither cold nor hunger, they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us, whom knowledge has made nice, and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cau-

tions requisite to secure tranquillity: and yet if we observed the manner in which those converse, who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavour of both parties, during the time of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known, and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continued affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask, and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterwards with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding-night, and that by a strange imposture one has been courted, and another married.

I desire you, therefore, Mr. RAMBLER, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behaviour in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment.

I am, &c.

N° 46. SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1750.

——Genus, et proavos et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.

OVID.

Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim;
All is my own, my honour, and my shame.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

SINCE I find that you have paid so much regard to my complaints as to publish them, I am inclined by vanity, or gratitude, to continue our correspondence; and indeed, without either of these motives, am glad of an opportunity to write, for I am not accustomed to keep in any thing that swells my heart, and have here none with whom I can freely converse. While I am thus employed, some tedious hours will slip away, and when I return to watch the clock, I shall find that I have disburdened myself of part of the day.

You perceive that I do not pretend to write with much consideration of any thing but my own convenience; and, not to conceal from you my real sentiments, the little time which I have spent, against my will, in solitary meditation, has not much contributed to my veneration for authors. I have now sufficient reason to suspect that, with all your splendid professions of wisdom, and seeming regard for truth, you have very little sincerity; that you either write what you do not think, and

willingly impose upon mankind, or that you take no care to think right, but while you set up yourselves as guides, mislead your followers by credulity or negligence; that you produce to the publick whatever notions you can speciously maintain, or elegantly express, without inquiring whether they are just; and transcribe hereditary falsehoods from old authors, perhaps as ignorant and careless as yourselves.

You may perhaps wonder that I express myself with so much acrimony on a question in which women are supposed to have very little interest; and you are likely enough, for I have seen many instances of the sauciness of scholars, to tell me, that I am more properly employed in playing with my kittens, than in giving myself airs of criticism, and censuring the learned. But you are mistaken if you imagine that I am to be intimidated by your contempt, or silenced by your reproofs. As I read, I have a right to judge; as I am injured I have a right to complain; and these privileges, which I have purchased at so dear a rate, I shall not easily be persuaded to resign.

To read has, indeed, never been my business; but as there are hours of leisure in the most active life, I have passed the superfluities of time which the diversions of the town left upon my hands, in turning over a large collection of tragedies and romances, where, amongst other sentiments common to all authors of this class, I have found almost every page filled with the charms and happiness of a country life; that life to which every statesman, in the highest elevation of his prosperity, is contriving to retire; that life to which every tragick

heroine in some scene or other wishes to have been born, and which is represented as a certain refuge from folly, from anxiety, from passion and from guilt.

It was impossible to read so many passionate exclamations, and soothing descriptions, without feeling some desire to enjoy the state in which all this felicity was to be enjoyed; and therefore I received with raptures the invitation of my good aunt, and expected that by some unknown influence I should find all hopes and fears, jealousies and competitions, vanish from my heart upon my first arrival at the seats of innocence and tranquillity; that I should sleep in halcyon bowers, and wander in elysian gardens, where I should meet with nothing but the softness of benevolence, the candour of simplicity, and the cheerfulness of content; where I should see reason exerting her sovereignty over life, without any interruption from envy, avarice, or ambition, and every day passing in such a manner as the severest wisdom should approve.

This, Mr. RAMBLER, I tell you I expected, and this I had by an hundred authors been taught to expect. By this expectation I was led hither, and here I live in perpetual uneasiness, without any other comfort than that of hoping to return to London.

Having, since I wrote my former letter, been driven by the mere necessity of escaping from absolute inactivity, to make myself more acquainted with the affairs and inhabitants of this place, I am now no longer an absolute stranger to rural conversation and employments, but am far from discovering in

them more innocence or wisdom, than in the sentiments or conduct of those with whom I have passed more cheerful and more fashionable hours.

It is common to reproach the tea-table, and the park, with giving opportunities and encouragement to scandal. I cannot wholly clear them from the charge; but must, however, observe, in favour of the modish prattlers, that, if not by principle, we are at least by accident, less guilty of defamation than the country ladies. For having greater numbers to observe and censure, we are commonly content to charge them only with their own faults or follies, and seldom give way to malevolence, but such as arises from some injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered to ourselves. But in these distant provinces, where the same families inhabit the same houses from age to age, they transmit and recount the faults of a whole succession. I have been informed how every estate in the neighbourhood was originally got, and find, if I may credit the accounts given me, that there is not a single acre in the hands of the right owner. I have been told of intrigues between beaus and toasts that have been now three centuries in their quiet graves, and am often entertained with traditional scandal on persons of whose names there would have been no remembrance, had they not committed somewhat that might disgrace their descendants.

In one of my visits I happened to commend the air and dignity of a young lady, who had just left the company; upon which two grave matrons looked with great slyness at each other, and the elder asked me whether I had ever seen the picture of

Henry the Eighth. You may imagine that I did not immediately perceive the propriety of the question; but after having waited a while for information, I was told that the lady's grandmother had a great grandmother that was an attendant on Anna Bullen, and supposed to have been too much a favourite of the king.

If once there happens a quarrel between the principal persons of two families, the malignity is continued without end, and it is common for old maids to fall out about some election, in which their grandfathers were competitors; the heart-burnings of the civil war are not yet extinguished; there are two families in the neighbourhood who have destroyed each other's game from the time of Philip and Mary; and when an account came of an inundation, which had injured the plantations of a worthy gentleman, one of the hearers remarked, with exultation, that he might now have some notion of the ravages committed by his ancestors in their retreat from Bosworth.

Thus malice and hatred descend here with an inheritance, and it is necessary to be well versed in history, that the various factions of this county may be understood. You cannot expect to be on good terms with families who are resolved to love nothing in common; and in selecting your intimates, you are perhaps to consider which party you most favour in the barons wars. I have often lost the good opinion of my aunt's visitants by confounding the interests of York and Lancaster, and was once censured for sitting silent when William Rufus was called a tyrant. I have, however, now thrown aside all pretences to circumspection,

for I find it impossible in less that seven years to learn all the requisite cautions. At London, if you know your company, and their parents, you are safe; but you are here suspected of alluding to the slips of great grandmothers, and of reviving contests which were decided in armour by the redoubted knights of ancient times. I hope therefore that you will not condemn my impatience, if I am weary of attending where nothing can be learned, and of quarrelling where there is nothing to contest, and that you will contribute to divert me while I stay here by some facetious performance.

I am, SIR,

EUPHELIA.

N° 47. TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1750.

Quanquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor & frangor eadem illa humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum permitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen velim durior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus nihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi magnos homines et sapientes videri. Qui an magni sapientesque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hominis est enim affici dolore, sentire: resistere tamen et solertia admittere; non solatiis non egere.

PLIN.

These proceedings have afforded me some comfort in my distress: notwithstanding which, I am still dispirited and unhinged by the same motives of humanity that induced me to grant such indulgences. However, I by no means wish to become less susceptible of tenderness. I know these kind of misfortunes would be estimated by other persons only as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief; to feel sorrow at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort. EARL OF ORRERY.

Of the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress; and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of hap-

piness really existing, and generally within the prospect. The miser always imagines that there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like king Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gaiety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain, and knows the medicine, to which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it requires what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed, that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or error which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement; the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it. Sorrow is properly that

state of the mind in which our desires are fixed upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that, however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief caused by the dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestick union.

It seems determined, by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice; it may afterwards be ad-

mitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice, to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterwards to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed, and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gaiety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity, and therefore many who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness no warmth of benevolence, nor any of those honest

joys which nature annexes to the power of pleasing. And as no man can justly claim more tenderness than he pays, he must forfeit his share in the officious and watchful kindness which love only can dictate, and those lenient endearments by which love only can soften life. He may justly be overlooked and neglected by such as have more warmth in their hearts; for who would be the friend of him, whom, with whatever assiduity he may be courted, and with whatever services obliged, his principles will not suffer to make equal returns, and who, when you have exhausted all the instances of good-will, can only be prevailed on not to be an enemy?

An attempt to preserve life in a state of neutrality and indifference, is unreasonable and vain. If by excluding joy we could shut out grief, the scheme would deserve very serious attention; but since, however we may debar our lives from happiness, misery will find its way at many inlets, and the assaults of pain will force our regard, though we may withhold it from the invitations of pleasure, we may surely endeavour to raise life above the middle point of apathy at one time, since it will necessarily sink below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not to gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it must be confessed that in proportion to the pleasure of possession, will be for some time our sorrow for the loss; it is therefore the province of the moralist to inquire whether such pains may not quickly give way to mitigation. Some have thought that the most certain way to clear the heart from its embarrassment, is to drag it by force into scenes of merriment. Others imagine, that such a transition is too violent, and re-

commend rather to soothe it into tranquillity, by making it acquainted with miseries more dreadful and afflictive, and diverting to the calamities of others the regards which we are inclined to fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those remedies will be sufficiently powerful. The efficacy of mirth it is not always easy to try, and the indulgence of melancholy may be suspected to be one of those medicines which will destroy, if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorrow, is employment. It is commonly observed, that among soldiers and seamen, though there is much kindness, there is little grief; they see their friend fall without any of that lamentation which is indulged in security and idleness, because they have no leisure to spare from the care of themselves; and whoever shall keep his thoughts equally busy, will find himself equally unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sorrow, and its effects might doubtless be accelerated by quickening the succession, and enlarging the variety of objects,

Si tempore longo
Leviri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit—— GROTIUS.

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief.
LEWIS.

Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied by exercise and motion.

N°48. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1750.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita.

MART.

For life is not to live, but to be well.

ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the innumerable follies, by which we lay up in our youth repentance and remorse for the succeeding part of our lives, there is scarce any against which warnings are of less efficacy, than neglect of health. When the springs of motion are yet elastick, when the heart bounds with vigour, and the eye sparkles with spirit, it is with difficulty that we are taught to conceive the imbecility that every hour is bringing upon us, or to imagine that the nerves which are now braced with so much strength, and the limbs which play with so much activity, will lose all their power under the gripe of time, relax with numbness, and totter with debility.

To the arguments which have been used against complaints under the miseries of life, the philosophers have, I think, forgot to add the incredulity of those to whom we recount our sufferings. But if the purpose of lamentation be to excite pity, it is surely superfluous for age and weakness to tell their plaintive stories; for pity presupposes sympathy, and a little attention will shew them, that those who do not feel pain, seldom think that it is felt: and a short recollection will inform almost

every man, that he i s only repaid the insult which he has given, since he may remember how often he has mocked infirmity, laughed at its cautions, and censured its impatience.

The valetudinarian race have made the care of health ridiculous by suffering it to prevail over all other considerations, as the miser has brought frugality into contempt, by permitting the love of money not to share, but to engross his mind; they both err alike, by confounding the means with the end; they grasp at health only to be well, as at money only to be rich; and forget that every terrestrial advantage is chiefly valuable, as it furnishes abilities for the exercise of virtue.

Health is indeed so necessary to all the duties, as well as pleasures of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to the folly; and he that for a short gratification brings weaknesses and diseases upon himself, and for the pleasure of a few years passed in the tumults of diversion and clamours of merriment, condemns the maturer and more experienced part of his life to the chamber and the couch, may be justly reproached, not only as a spendthrift of his own happiness, but as a robber of the publick; as a wretch that has voluntarily disqualified himself for the business of his station, and refused that part which Providence assigns him in the general task of human nature.

There are perhaps very few conditions more to be pitied than that of an active and elevated mind, labouring under the weight of a distempered body; the time of such a man is always spent in forming schemes, which a change of wind hinders him from executing, his powers fume away in projects and

in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thought of to-morrow, pleases his ambition with the fame he shall acquire, or his benevolence with the good he shall confer. But in the night the skies are overcast, the temper of the air is changed, he wakes in languor, impatience, and distraction, and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but to misery. It may be said that disease generally begins that equality which death completes: the distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay, or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing left him but the consciousness of innocence.

There is among the fragments of the Greek poets a short hymn to Health, in which her power of exalting the happiness of life, of heightening the gifts of fortune, and adding enjoyment to possession, is inculcated with so much force and beauty, that no one, who has ever languished under the discomforts and infirmities of a lingering disease, can read it without feeling the images dance in his heart, and adding from his own experience new vigour to the wish, and from his own imagination new colours to the picture. The particular occasion of this little composition is not known, but it is probable that the author had been sick, and in the first raptures of returning vigour addressed Health in the following manner:

Ὑγίεια πρεσβιστα Μακαρων,
Μετα σου ναιοιμι
Το λειπομενον βιοτας·
Συ δε μοι προφρων Συνοικός ειης.
Ἐι γαρ τις η πλουτου χαρις η τεκεων,
Τας ευδαιμονος τ' ανθρωποις
Βασιληιοδος αρχας, η ποθων,
Ους κρυφιοις Αφροδιτης αρκυσιν θηρευομεν,
Ἠ ει τις ακκα θεοθεν ανθρωποις τερψις,
Ἠ πονων αμπνοα πεφανται·
Μετα Σειο μακαραι, Υγιεια,
Τεθηλε παντα, καὶ λαμπει χαριτων εαρ.
Σεθεν δε χωρις, ουδεις ευδαιμων πελει.

"Health, most venerable of the powers of heaven! with thee may the remaining part of my life be passed, nor do thou refuse to bless me with thy residence. For whatever there is of beauty or of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of desire which we endeavour to chase into the toils of love; whatever delight, or whatever solace is granted by the celestials, to soften our fatigues; in thy presence, thou parent of happiness, all those joys spread out and flourish; in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, and without thee no man is happy."

Such is the power of health, that without its co-operation every other comfort is torpid and lifeless, as the powers of vegetation without the sun. And yet this bliss is commonly thrown away in thoughtless negligence, or in foolish experiments on our own strength; we let it perish without remembering its value, or waste it to shew how much we have to spare; it is sometimes given up to the management of levity and chance, and

sometimes sold for the applause of jollity and debauchery.

Health is equally neglected, and with equal impropriety, by the votaries of business and the followers of pleasure. Some men ruin the fabrick of their bodies by incessant revels, and others by intemperate studies; some batter it by excess, and others sap it by inactivity. To the noisy route of bacchanalian rioters, it will be to little purpose that advice is offered, though it requires no great abilities to prove that he loses pleasure who loses health; their clamours are too loud for the whispers of caution, and they run the course of life with too much precipitance to stop at the call of wisdom. Nor perhaps will they that are busied in adding thousands to thousands, pay much regard to him that shall direct them to hasten more slowly to their wishes. Yet since lovers of money are generally cool, deliberate, and thoughtful, they might surely consider, that the greater good ought not to be sacrificed to the less. Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured; but thousands and millions are of small avail to alleviate the protracted tortures of the gout, to repair the broken organs of of sense, or resuscitate the powers of digestion. Poverty is, indeed, an evil from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to another, nor take shelter in the arms of sickness.

——Projicere animam! quam vellent æthere in alto
Nunc & pauperiem, & duros tolerare labores!

For healthful indigence in vain they pray,
In quest of wealth who throw their lives away.

Those who lose their health in an irregular and impetuous pursuit of literary accomplishments are yet less to be excused; for they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced. Whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury; and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed, must give up years to the listlessness of languor, and the implacability of pain. They whose endeavour is, mental excellence, will learn perhaps too late how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find, that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude,

N° 49. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1750.

Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
i tabit Libitinam, usque ego postera
Crescam laude recens.

HOR.

Whole Horace shall not die; his songs shall save
The greatest portion from the greedy grave.

THE first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw

by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terror in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites, and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason, new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and

from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which, therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations whose artless and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor, because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a village, than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of those adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned; some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness, or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some, as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what,

say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus wildly put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds—That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings—That the soul of man formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to

consider herself as co-operating with future ages, and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished?

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather than extinguished; and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity indifferently, to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferior and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds, that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompence which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered, is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyrick can confer, and is no more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, "that he had eaten many a meal, "drunk many a flaggon, and uttered many a re-"proach."

Πολλα φαγων, και πολλα πιων, και πολλα κακ' ειπων
Ανθρωπος κειμαι Τιμοκρεων Ροδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times must arise from the hope, that, with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

N°50. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1750.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat, atque
Barbato cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret
Plura domi fraga et majores glandis acervos.

And had not men the hoary head rever'd,
And boys paid rev'rence when a man appear'd,
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acorns in their store.

I HAVE always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend the virtues, as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries, and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who can once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undistinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive

right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shewn; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by willingness to credit than ability to prove them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time, to censure the new comers into life, for want of respect to grey hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated, by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age, which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world, and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he assumes who dares to claim the privilege of com-

plaining; for as every man has, in his own opinion a full share of the miseries of life, he is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness as a proof of impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, What merit has this man to shew, by which he has acquired a right to repine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imagine that exemptions should be granted him from the general condition of man? We find ourselves excited rather to captiousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to soothe his complaints by sympathy and tenderness, we inquire, whether the pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, supposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and folly rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so often to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to inquiries like these. For surely it will be thought at the first view of things, that if age be thus contemned and ridiculed, insulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on either part. They who have had opportunities of establishing their authority over minds ductile and unresisting, they who have been the protectors of helplessness and the instructors of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the power of wealth and the dignity of command, must defeat their influence by their own misconduct, and make use of all these advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure to themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open mockery and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that

lawful and settled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well employed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility, is necessary to the suppression of that reverence with which the majority of mankind look upon their governors, and on those whom they see surrounded by splendour and fortified by power. For though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet they are easily kept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their hands, till their veneration is dissipated by such wickedness and folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected, that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess of debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly or thoughtlessly employed, that priority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own eyes in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate; but dictates, though liberally enough bestowed, are generally without effect; the teacher gains few proselytes by instruction which his own

behaviour contradicts; and young men miss the benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state, and every new race is to gain the prudence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolicks, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards, with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gaiety with faultering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away, and that, if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est.

You've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink:
'Tis time to quit the scene—'tis time to think.
ELPHINSTON.

Another vice of age, by which the rising generation may be alienated from it, is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command, and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution: and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their fathers' company.

He that would pass the latter part of his life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of action shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct.

N° 51. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1750.

——*Stultus labor est ineptiarum.*

MART.

How foolish is the toil of trifling cares!

ELPHINST.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR

As you have allowed a place in your paper to Euphelia's letters from the country, and appear to think no form of human life unworthy of your attention, I have resolved, after many struggles with idleness and diffidence, to give you some account of my entertainment in this sober season of universal retreat, and to describe to you the employments of those who look with contempt on the pleasures and diversions of polite life, and employ all their powers of censure and invective upon the uselessness, vanity, and folly of dress, visits, and conversation.

When a tiresome and vexatious journey of four days has brought me to the house, where invitation regularly sent for seven years together, had at last induced me to pass the summer, I was surprised after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded and every motion agitated. The old lady, who was my father's relation, was, indeed,

very full of the happiness which she received from my visit, and according to the forms of obsolete breeding, insisted that I should recompense the long delay of my company with a promise not to leave her till winter. But, amidst all her kindness and caresses, she very frequently turned her head aside, and whispered, with anxious earnestness, some order to her daughters, which never failed to send them out with unpolite precipitation. Sometimes her impatience would not suffer her to stay behind; she begged my pardon, she must leave me for a moment; she went, and returned, and sat down again, but was again disturbed by some new care, dismissed her daughters with the same trepidation, and followed them with the same countenance of business and solicitude.

However I was alarmed at this show of eagerness and disturbance, and however my curiosity was excited by such busy preparations as naturally promised some great event, I was yet too much a stranger to gratify myself with inquiries; but finding none of the family in mourning, I pleased myself with imagining that I should rather see a wedding than a funeral.

At last we sat down to supper, when I was informed that one of the young ladies, after whom I thought myself obliged to inquire, was under a necessity of attending some affair that could not be neglected: soon afterward my relation began to talk of the regularity of her family, and the inconvenience of London hours; and at last let me know that they had purposed that night to go to bed sooner than was usual, because they were to rise early in the morning to make cheesecakes.

This hint sent me to my chamber, to which I was accompanied by all the ladies, who begged me to excuse some large sieves of leaves and flowers that covered two thirds of the floor, for they intended to distil them when they were dry; and they had no other room that so conveniently received the rising sun.

The scent of the plants hindered me from rest, and therefore I rose early in the morning with a resolution to explore my new habitation. I stole unperceived by my cousins into the garden, where I found nothing either more great or elegant, than in the same number of acres cultivated for the market. Of the gardener I soon learned that his lady was the greatest manager in that part of the country, and that I was come hither at the time in which I might learn to make more pickles and conserves, than could be seen at any other house a hundred miles round.

It was not long before her ladyship gave me sufficient opportunities of knowing her character, for she was too much pleased with her own accomplishments to conceal them, and took occasion from some sweetmeats which she set next day upon the table, to discourse for two long hours upon robs and jellies; laid down the best methods of conserving, reserving and preserving all sorts of fruit; told us with great contempt of the London lady in the neighbourhood, by whom these terms were very often confounded; and hinted how much she should be ashamed to set before company, at her own house, sweetmeats of so dark a colour as she had often seen at mistress Sprightly's.

It is, indeed, the great business of her life to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection; and the employments to which she has bred her daughters are to turn rose-leaves in the shade, to pick out the seeds of currants with a quill, to gather fruit without bruising it, and to extract bean-flower water for the skin. Such are the tasks with which every day since I came hither has begun and ended, to which the early hours of life are sacrificed, and in which that time is passing away which never shall return.

But to reason or expostulate are hopeless attempts. The lady has settled her opinions, and maintains the dignitiy ofher own performances with all the firmness of stupidity accustomed to be flattered. Her daughters having never seen any house but their own, believe their mother's excellence on her own word. Her husband is a mere sportsman, who is pleased to see his table well furnished, and thinks the day sufficiently successful, in which he brings home a leash of hares to be potted by his wife.

After a few days, I pretended to want books, but my lady soon told me that none of her books would suit my taste; for her part she never loved to see young women give their minds to such follies, by which they would only learn to use hard words; she bred up her daughters to understand a house, and whoever should marry them, if they knew any thing of good cookery, would never repent it.

There are however some things in the culinary

sciences too sublime for youthful intellects, mysteries into which they must not be initiated till the years of serious maturity, and which are referred to the day of marraige, as the supreme qualification for connubial life. She makes an orange pudding, which is the envy of all the neighbourhood, and which she has hitherto found means of mixing and baking with such secrecy, that the ingredient to which it owes its flavour has never been discovered. She, indeed, conducts this great affair with all the caution that human policy can suggest. It is never known beforehand when this pudding will be produced; she takes the ingredients privately into her own closet, employs her maids and daughters in different parts of the house, orders the oven to be heated for a pie, and places the pudding in it with her own hands; the mouth of the oven is then stopped, and all inquiries are vain.

The composition of the pudding she has, however, promised Clarinda, that if she pleases her in marriage, she shall be told it without reserve. But the art of making English capers she has not yet persuaded herself to discover, but seems resolved the secret shall perish with her, as some alchymists have obstinately suppressed the art of transmuting metals.

I once ventured to lay my fingers on her book of culinary receipts, which she left upon the table, having intelligence that a vessel of gooseberry wine had burst the hoops. But though the importance of the event sufficiently engrossed her care, to prevent any recollection of the danger to which her secrets were exposed, I was not able to make use of the golden moments; for this treasure of here-

ditary knowledge was so well concealed by the manner of spelling used by her grandmother, her mother, and herself, that I was totally unable to understand it, and lost the opportunity of consulting the oracle, for want of knowing the language in which its answers were returned.

It is, indeed, necessary, if I have any regard to her ladyship's esteem, that I should apply myself to some of these œconomical accomplishments; for I overheard her two days ago, warning her daughters, by my mournful example, against negligence of pastry, and ignorance in carving: for you saw, said she, that with all her pretensions to knowledge, she turned the partridge the wrong way when she attempted to cut it, and I believe scarcely knows the difference between paste raised and paste in a dish.

The reason, Mr. Rambler, why I have laid Lady Bustle's character before you, is a desire to be informed whether, in your opinion, it is worthy of imitation, and whether I shall throw away the books which I have hitherto thought it my duty to read, for *the lady's closet opened*, *the complete servant maid*, and *the court cook*, and resign all curiosity after right and wrong for the art of scalding damascenes without bursting them, and preserving the whiteness of pickled mushrooms.

Lady Bustle has, indeed, by this incessant application to fruits and flowers, contracted her cares into a narrow space, and set herself free from many perplexities with which other minds are disturbed. She has no curiosity after the events of a war, or the fate of heroes in distress; she can hear without the least emotion the rav ge of a fire, or devastations

of a storm; her neighbours grow rich or poor, come into the world or go out of it, without regard, while she is pressing the jelly-bag, or airing the store-room; but I cannot perceive that she is more free from disquiets than those whose understandings take a wider range. Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, and the rain sometimes falls upon fruit which ought to be gathered dry. While her artificial wines are fermenting, her whole life is restlessness and anxiety. Her sweetmeats are not always bright, and the maid sometimes forgets the just proportion of salt and pepper, when venison is to be baked. Her conserves mould, her wines sour, and pickles mother; and like all the rest of mankind, she is every day mortified with the defeat of her schemes and the disappointment of her hopes.

With regard to vice and virtue she seems a kind of neutral being. She has no crime but luxury; nor any virtue but chastity; she has no desire to be praised but for her cookery, nor wishes any ill to the rest of mankind, but that whenever they aspire to a feast, their custards may be wheyish, and their pie-crusts tough.

I am now very impatient to know whether I am to look on these ladies as the great patterns of our sex, and to consider conserves and pickles as the business of my life; whether the censure which I now suffer be just, and whether the brewers of wines, and the distillers of washes, have a right to look with insolence on the weakness of

CORNELIA.

N°52. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1751.

——Quoties flenti Theseius heros
Siste modum, dixit; neque enim fortuna querenda
Sola tua est: similes aliorum respice casus
Mitius ista feres.

OVID.

How oft in vain, the son of Theseus said,
The stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone;
Weigh other's woes, and learn to bear thy own.

CATCOTT.

AMONG the various methods of consolation, to which the miseries inseparable from our present state have given occasion, it has been, as I have already remarked, recommended by some writers to put the sufferer in mind of heavier pressures, and more excruciating calamities, than those of which he has himself reason to complain.

This has, in all ages, been directed and practised; and, in conformity to this custom, Lipsius, the great modern master of the Stoick philosophy, has, in his celebrated treatise on steadiness of mind, endeavoured to fortify the breast against too much sensibility of misfortune by enumerating the evils which have in former ages fallen upon the world, the devastation of wide extended regions, the sack of cities, and massacre of nations. And the common voice of the multitude uninstructed by precept, and unprejudiced by authority, which, in

questions that relate to the heart of man, is, in my opinion, more decisive than the learning of Lipsius, seems to justify the efficacy of this procedure; for one of the first comforts which one neighbour administers to another, is a relation of the like infelicity, combined with circumstances of greater bitterness.

But this medicine of the mind is like many remedies applied to the body, of which, though we see the effects, we are unacquainted with the manner of operation, and of which, therefore, some, who are unwilling to suppose any thing out of the reach of their own sagacity, have been inclined to doubt whether they have really those virtues for which they are celebrated, and whether their reputation is not the mere gift of fancy, prejudice, and credulity.

Consolation, or comfort, are words which, in their proper acceptation, signify some alleviation of that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy; they imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing, than a diminution of the burden. A prisoner is relieved by him that sets him at liberty, but receives comfort from such as suggest considerations by which he is made patient under the inconvenience of confinement. To that grief which arises from a great loss, he only brings the true remedy who makes his friend's condition the same as before; but he may be properly termed a comforter, who by persuasion extenuates the pain of poverty, and shews, in the style of Hesiod, that *half is more than the whole.*

It is, perhaps, not immediately obvious, how it

can lull the memory of misfortune, or appease the throbbings of anguish, to hear that others are more miserable; others, perhaps, unknown, or wholly indifferent, whose prosperity raises no envy, and whose fall can gratify no resentment. Some topicks of comfort arising, like that which gave hope and spirit to the captive of Sesostris, from the perpetual vicissitudes of life, and mutability of human affairs, may as properly raise the dejected as depress the proud, and have an immediate tendency to exhilarate and revive. But how can it avail the man who languishes in the gloom of sorrow, without prospect of emerging into the sunshine of cheerfulness, to hear that others are sunk yet deeper in the dungeon of misery, shackled with heavier chains, and surrounded with darker desperation?

The solace arising from this consideration seems indeed the weakest of all others, and is perhaps never properly applied, but in cases where there is no place for reflections of more speedy and pleasing efficacy. But even from such calamities life is by no means free; a thousand ills incurable, a thousand losses irreparable, a thousand difficulties insurmountable, are known, or will be known, by all the sons of men. Native deformity cannot be rectified, a dead friend cannot return, and the hours of youth trifled away in folly or lost in sickness cannot be restored.

Under the oppression of such melancholy, it has been found useful to take a survey of the world, to contemplate the various scenes of distress in which mankind are struggling round us, and acquaint ourselves with the *terribiles visu formæ*, the various shapes of misery, which make havock of

terrestrial happiness, range all corners almost without restraint, trample down our hopes at the hour of harvest, and when we have built our schemes to the top, ruin their foundations.

The first effect of this meditation is, that it furnishes a new employment for the mind, and engages the passions on remoter objects; as kings have sometimes freed themselves from a subject too haughty to be governed and too powerful to be crushed, by posting him in a distant province, till his popularity has subsided or his pride been repressed. The attention is dissipated by variety, and acts more weakly upon any single part, as that torrent many be drawn off to different channels, which, pouring down in one collected body, cannot be resisted. This species of comfort is, therefore, unavailing in severe paroxysms of corporal pain, when the mind is every instant called back to misery, and in the first shock of any sudden evil; but will certainly be of use against encroaching melancholy, and a settled habit of gloomy thoughts.

It is further advantageous, as it supplies us with opportunities of making comparisons in our own favour. We know that very little of the pain or pleasure which does not begin and end in our senses, is otherwise than relative; we are rich or poor, great or little, in proportion to the number that excel us, or fall below us in any of these respects; and therefore, a man, whose uneasiness arises from reflection on any misfortune that throws him below those with whom he was once equal, is comforted by finding that he is not yet the lowest.

There is another kind of comparison, less tending towards the vice of envy, very well illustrated

by an old poet, whose system will not afford many reasonable motives to content. "It is," says he, "pleasing to look from shore upon the tumults of "a storm, and to see a ship struggling with the "billows; it is pleasing, not because the pain of "another can give us delight, but because we have a "stronger impression of the happiness of safety." Thus when we look abroad, and behold the multitudes that are groaning under evils heavier than those which we have experienced, we shrink back to our own state, and instead of repining that so much must be felt, learn to rejoice that we have not more to feel.

By this observation of the miseries of others, fortitude is strengthened, and the mind brought to a more extensive knowledge of her own powers. As the heroes of action catch the flame from one another, so they to whom Providence has allotted the harder task of suffering with calmness and dignity, may animate themselves by the remembrance of those evils which have been laid on others, perhaps naturally as weak as themselves, and bear up with vigour and resolution against their own oppressions, when they see it possible that more severe afflictions may be borne.

There is still another reason why, to many minds, the relation of other men's infelicity may give a lasting and continual relief. Some, not well instructed in the measures by which Providence distributes happiness, are perhaps misled by divines, who, as Bellarmine makes temporal prosperity one of the characters of the true church, have represented wealth and ease as the certain concomitants of virtue, and the unfailing result of the divine

approbation. Such sufferers are dejected in their misfortunes, not so much for what they feel, as for what they dread; not because they cannot support the sorrows, or endure the wants of their present condition, but because they consider them as only the beginnings of more sharp and lasting pains. To these mourners it is an act of the highest charity to represent the calamities which not only virtue has suffered, but virtue has incurred; to inform them that one evidence of a future state is the uncertainty of any present reward for goodness; and to remind them, from the highest authority, of the distresses and penury of men *of whom the world was not worthy*.

N° 53. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1750.

Φειδεο των κλεανων. *Epigram Vet.*
Husband thy possessions.

THERE is scarcely among the evils of human life, any so generally dreaded as poverty. Every other species of misery, those who are not much accustomed to disturb the present moment with reflection can easily forget, because it is not always forced upon their regard: but it is impossible to pass a day or an hour in the confluxes of men, without seeing how much indigence is exposed to contumely, neglect, and insult: and, in its lowest state, to hunger and nakedness; to injuries against which every passion is in arms, and to wants which nature cannot sustain.

Against other evils the heart is often hardened by true or by false notions of dignity and reputation: thus we see dangers of every kind faced with willingness, because bravery, in a good or bad cause, is never without its encomiasts and admirers. But in the prospect of poverty, there is nothing but gloom and melancholy; the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach: a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness; of which the hardships are without honour, and the labours without reward.

Of these calamities there seems not to be wantnig a general conviction; we hear on every side the

noise of trade, and see the streets thronged with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive than the hope of gain: and the whole world is put in motion, by the desire of that wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty; for it is more useful for defence than acquisition, and is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil.

Yet there are always some whose passions or follies lead them to a conduct opposite to the general maxims and practice of mankind; some who seem to rush upon poverty, with the same eagerness with which others avoid it; who see their revenues hourly lessened, and the estates which they inherit from their ancestors mouldering away, without resolution to change their course of life; who persevere against all remonstrances, and go forward with full career, though they see before them the precipice of destruction.

It is not my purpose, in this paper, to expostulate with such as ruin their fortunes by expensive schemes of buildings and gardens, which they carry on with the same vanity that prompted them to begin, chusing, as it happens in a thousand other cases, the remote evil before the lighter, and deferring the shame of repentance till they incur the miseries of distress. Those for whom I intend my present admonitions, are the thoughtless, the negligent, and the dissolute; who, having by the viciousness of their own inclinations, or the seducements of alluring companions, been engaged in habits of expence, and accustomed to move in a certain round of pleasures disproportioned to their

condition, are without power to extricate themselves from the inchantments of custom, avoid thought because they know it will be painful, and continue, from day to day and from month to month, to anticipate their revenues, and sink every hour deeper in the gulphs of usury and extortion.

This folly has less claim to pity, because it cannot be imputed to the vehemence of sudden passion; nor can the mischief which it produces be extenuated as the effect of any single act, which rage or desire might execute before there could be time for an appeal to reason. These men are advancing towards misery by soft approaches, and destroying themselves not by the violence of a blow, which, when once given, can never be recalled, but by a slow poison, hourly repeated and obstinately continued.

This conduct is so absurd when it is examined by the unprejudiced eye of rational judgment, that nothing but experience could evince its possibility; yet, absurd as it is, the sudden fall of some families, and the sudden rise of others, prove it to be common; and every year sees many wretches reduced to contempt and want, by their costly sacrifices to pleasure and vanity.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purpose. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection, too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader, too much ardour takes away from the lover that easiness of address with which ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity aud incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and devoid alike of knowledge and of virtue? By whom is this profusion praised, but by wretches who consider him as subservient to their purposes, Sirens that entice him to shipwreck, and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinions, looks with scorn, or pity, neither of which can afford much gratification to pride, on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockeys, vintners and attorneys, who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to his appetite, and heighten his desires by counterfeited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by prodigality. Even when it is yet not discovered to be false, it is the praise only of those whom it is reproachful to please, and whose sincerity is corrupted by their interest: men who live by the riots which they encourage, and who know that whenever their pupil grows wise, they shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteries, if they could last, might the cravings of vanity, which are seldom very delicate, be

satisfied; but the time is always hastening forward when this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, and when those who now surround him with obsequiousness and compliments, fawn among his equipage, and animate his riots, shall turn upon him with insolence, and reproach him with the vices prompted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man who squanders his estate by vain or vicious expences, to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtained by others. To make any happiness sincere, it is necessary that we believe it to be lasting; since whatever we suppose ourselves in danger of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude and uneasiness, and the more value we set upon it, the more must the present possession be imbittered. How can he then be envied for his felicity, who knows that its continuance cannot be expected, and who is conscious that a very short time will give him up to the gripe of poverty, which will be harder to be borne, as he has given way to more excesses, wantoned in greater abundance, and indulged his appetites with more profuseness?

It appears evident that frugality is necessary even to complete the pleasure of expence; for it may be generally remarked of those who squander what they know their fortune not sufficient to allow, that in their most jovial expence, there always breaks out some proof of discontent and impatience; they either scatter with a kind of wild desperation and affected lavishness, as criminals brave the gallows when they cannot escape it, or pay their money with a peevish anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend idly and to save meanly; having neither

firmness to deny their passions, nor courage to gratify them, they murmur at their own enjoyments, & poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection on the cost.

Among these men there is often the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, by the help of wine and riot, and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep with disturbs their gaiety, and calls upon them to retreat from ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short continuance, and must be expiated by a long series of misery and regret. In a short time the creditor grows impatient, the last acre is sold, the passions and appetites still continue their tyranny, with incessant calls for their usual gratifications, and the remainder of life passes away in vain repentance or impotent desire.

N° 54. SATURDAY SEPT. 22, 1750.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos. HOR.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies. FRAN.

TO THE RAMBLER.

I HAVE lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last

hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me, if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects, which, though of the utmost importance, and of indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topicks of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reaoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded; shew the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and shew the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians: the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparation; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytick science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease; he will there find vanity divested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gaieties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable.

Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of ambition, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise, which however merited, or however sincere, shall after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness, nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a

bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and to open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past, we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terror without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted and too piercing to be endured: but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind, the effects which the observation of death produces, in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by far the greater part it is wholly unregarded, their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulph of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage,

and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed a more painful occurrence, than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable, it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannnot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness, and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history know that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Carden and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed.

Tu-ne etiam moreris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fall'n! ere anger could subside
And love return, has great Erasmus died!

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our errors. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses of our friends, and endeavour by mutual endearments to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last.

ATHANATUS.

N° 55. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1750.

Maturo propior desine funeri
Inter ludere virgines,
Et stellis maculam spargere candidis:
Non siquid Pholoen satis
Et te, Chlore, decet.——

Now near to death that comes but slow,
Now thou art ſtepping down below;
Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
But think on ghosts and empty shades:
What suits with Pholoe in her bloom,
Gray Chloris, will not thee become;
A bed is different from a tomb.

CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE been but a little time conversant in the world, yet I have already had frequent oppor-

tunities of observing the little efficacy of remonstrance and complaint, which, however extorted by oppression, or supported by reason, are detested by one part of the world as rebellion, censured by another as peevishness, by some heard with an appearance of compassion, only to betray any of those sallies of vehemence and resentment, which are apt to break out upon encouragement, and by others passed over with indifference and neglect, as matters in which they have no concern, and which, if they should endeavour to examine or regulate, they might draw mischief upon themselves.

Yet since it is no less natural for those who think themselves injured to complain, than for others to neglect their complaints, I shall venture to lay my case before you, in hopes that you will enforce my opinion, if you think it just, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if I am mistaken. I expect at least, that you will divest yourself of partiality, and that whatever your age or solemnity may be, you will not, with the dotard's insolence, pronounce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and refactory, only because you perceive that I am young.

My father dying when I was but ten years old, left me, and a brother two years younger than myself, to the care of my mother, a woman of birth and education, whose prudence or virtue he had no reason to distrust. She felt, for some time, all the sorrow which nature calls forth, upon the final separation of persons dear to one another; and as her grief was exhausted by its own violence, it subsided into tenderness for me and my brother, and the year of mourning was spent in caresses, consolations and instruction, in celebration of my father's

virtues, in professions of perpetual regard to his memory, and hourly instances of such fondness as gratitude will not easily suffer me to forget.

But when the term of this mournful felicity was expired, and my mother appeared again without the ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaintance began to tell her, upon whatever motives, that it was time to live like the rest of the world; a powerful argument, which is seldom used to women without effect. Lady Giddy was incessantly relating the occurrences of the town, and Mrs. Gravely told her privately, with great tenderness, that it began to be publickly observed how much she over-acted her part, and that most of her acquaintance suspected her hope of procuring another husband to be the true ground of all that appearance of tenderness and piety.

All the officiousness of kindness and folly was busied to change her conduct. She was at one time alarmed with censure, and at another fired with praise. She was told of balls, where others shone only because she was absent; of new comedies, to which all the town was crowding; and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestick diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Mrs. Giddy to a play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a very fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty pre-

vailed on to play at Mrs. Gravely's, and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions that had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather be absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without controul, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expences, and her company; and learned, by degrees, to drop an expression of contempt, or pity, at the mention of ladies whose husbnnds were suspected of restraining their pleasures or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased.

I was still favoured with some incidental precepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa: but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirit; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other

reasons she alleged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity, and idleness, that she soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety, and both I and my brother were dispatched to boarding-schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburdened I am not able to inform you, but I have reason to believe that trifles and amusements took still faster hold of her heart. At first, she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but in a short time, both her visits and her letters were at an end, and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home, at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation, "that "this girl will presently be a woman." I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, "Well, "now I shall recover."

In six months more I came again, and with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother's embrace, when she stopt me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no others girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than, "Nay, if you are angry, ma-"dam Steeple, you may walk off."

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of

resentment a reason for continuing her malignity, and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child, and I know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden sister of my father, who could not bear to see women in hanging-sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shewn long enough in publick places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as an usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing her down the precipice of age, that I might reign without a superior. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every word and look is an offence. I never speak, but I pretend to some qualities and excellencies which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world, and when she

comes home in vapours, I am certain that she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradiction and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution, only because I was born ten years too soon, and cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions, you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could shew them, that though they may refuse to grow wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not musick and compliments, but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while there yet remain a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

N° 56. SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1750.

——*Valeat res ludicra, si me*
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum.
HOR.

Farewel the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond purſuits of pleasure or of fame,
If I muſt sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied.
FRANCIS.

NOTHING is more unpleasing than to find that offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence, a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to the purposes of life; because tho' his conscience may easily acquit him of *malicé prepense*, of settled hatred or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain, that he has not failed by negligence or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary, that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibilty of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or by whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with wonder, and now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affection of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as corrupt and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live but to infuse malignity and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by trampling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness, for the sake of peevishness, petulance, or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyrick always concluded with confessions of disgust;—'he is a good man, but I cannot like him.' Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue, without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill œconomy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity. Men whose perceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably; that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or impute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain, and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or vanity, have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation, which are to be practised without expence, and by which those may be made our friends, who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn; for who would want that love which is so easily to be gained? And such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit?

Some, indeed, there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alleged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teazing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependents and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own inclination, have forgotten that others have a claim to the same deference.

Tyranny thus avowed, is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain, and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness with a luxurious table and an open purse.

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers, to give themselves up implicity to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing; of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best designs where opposition must be

encountered, and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty; but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard be had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain, and there will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And indeed when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent, I, who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imagining to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resentment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next paper, a place which they have never yet obtained; others writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted.

of contempt, which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation, every one by different ways endeavouring to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appearances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectations of renown; and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up, by one who expects to find it filled with his own production, and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal, I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes however do not yet forsake him: he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation, and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page with which he has doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty what atonement can be made? for such calamities what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation, and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let therefore the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift, and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his

design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author: if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

N° 57. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2. 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quam magnum vectigal sit parsimonia. TULL.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM always pleased when I see literature made useful, and scholars descending from that elevation, which, as it raises them above common life, must likewise hinder them from beholding the ways of men otherwise than in a cloud of bustle and confusion. Having lived a life of business, and remarked how seldom any occurrences emerge for which great qualities are required, I have learned the necessity of regarding little things, and though I do not pretend to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or to limit the range of those powerful minds that carry light and heat through

all the regions of knowledge, yet I have long thought, that the greatest part of those who lose themselves in studies, by which I have not found that they grow much wiser, might, with more advantage both to the publick and themselves, apply their understandings to domestick arts, and store their minds with axioms of humble prudence and private œconomy.

Your late paper on frugality was very elegant and pleasing, but, in my opinion, not sufficiently adapted to common readers, who pay little regard to the musick of periods, the artifice of connection, or the arrangement of the flowers of rhetorick; but require a few plain and cogent instructions, which may sink into the mind by their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness of the world, so beneficial in its various forms to every rank of men, from the highest of human potentantes, to the lowest labourer or artificer; and the miseries which the neglect of it produces are so numerous and so grievous, that it ought to be recommended with every variation of address, and adapted to every class of understanding.

Whether those who treat morals as a science will allow frugality to be numbered among the virtues, I have not thought it necessary to inquire. For I, who draw my opinions from a careful observation of the world, am satisfied with knowing, what is abundantly sufficient for practice, that if it be not a virtue, it is at least a quality which can seldom exist without some virtues, and without which few virtues can exist. Frugality may be termed the daughter of Prudence, the

sister of Temperance, and the parent of Liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependence, and invite corruption; it will almost always produce a passive compliance with the wickedness of others; and there are few who do not learn by degrees to practise those crimes which they cease to censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty as dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unanimous enough in abhorring it as destructive to happiness; and all to whom want is terrible, upon whatever principle, ought to think themselves obliged to learn the sage maxims of our parsimonious ancestors, and attain the salutary arts of contracting expence; for without frugality none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor.

To most other acts of virtue or exertions of wisdom, a concurrence of many circumstances is necessary; some previous knowledge must be attained, some uncommon gifts of nature possessed, or some opportunity produced by any extraordinary combination of things; but the mere power of saving what is already in our hands, must be easy of acquisition to every mind; and as the example of Bacon may shew, that the highest intellect cannot safely neglect it, a thousand instances will every day prove, that the meanest may practise it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great numbers, because to be rich is to possess more than is commonly placed in a single hand; and, if many could obtain the sum which now makes a man wealthy, the name of wealth must then be transferred to still greater accumulation. But I

am not certain that it is equally impossible to exempt the lower classes of mankind from poverty; because though whatever be the wealth of the community, some will always have least, and he that has less than any other is comparatively poor; yet I do not see any co-active necessity that many should be without the indispensable conveniences of life; but am sometimes inclined to imagine, that, casual calamities excepted, there might, by universal prudence, be procured an universal exemption from want; and that he who should happen to have least, might notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations which I do not remember that any political calculator has attempted, and in which the most perspicacious reasoner may be easily bewildered, it is evident that they to whom Providence has allotted no other care but of their own fortune and their own virtue, which make far the greater part of mankind, have sufficient incitements to personal frugality: since, whatever might be its general effect upon provinces or nations, by which it is never likely to be tried, we know with certainty that there is scarcely any individual entering the world, who, by prudent parsimony, may not reasonably promise himself a cheerful competence in the decline of life.

The prospect of penury in age is so gloomy and terrifying, that every man who looks before him must resolve to avoid it; and it must be avoided generally by the science of sparing. For, though in every age there are some, who by bold adven-

tures, or by favourable accidents, rise suddenly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge hopes of such rare events: and the bulk of mankind must owe their affluence to small and gradual profits, below which their expence must be resolutely reduced.

You must not therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend to the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom, *A penny saved is two-pence got*; which may, I think, be accommodated to all conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will save time when they forbear expence, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations, will find, by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be inquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expence, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such questions no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that *a man's voluntary expence should not exceed his revenue*—a maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and

debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the warm, the fanciful, and the brave; *Let no man anticipate uncertain profits.* Let no man presume so spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which, I suppose, are, at least among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another, *Let no man squander against his inclination.* With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply; yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be borne away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, Sir, your humble Servant,

SOPHRON.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.